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THE WALKING DEAD 22

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KIRKMAN • ADLARD • RATHBURN

TM
'05

IMAGE COMICS PRESENTS

THE WALKING



ROBERT KIRKMAN

Creator, Writer

CHARLIE ADLARD

Penciler, Inker

CLIFF RATHBURN

Gray Tones

RUS WOOTON

Letterer

TONY MOORE

Cover

FOR IMAGE COMICS

Erik Larsen Todd McFarlane
Publisher President

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Eric Stephenson Jim Demonakos
Executive Director PR & Marketing Coordinator

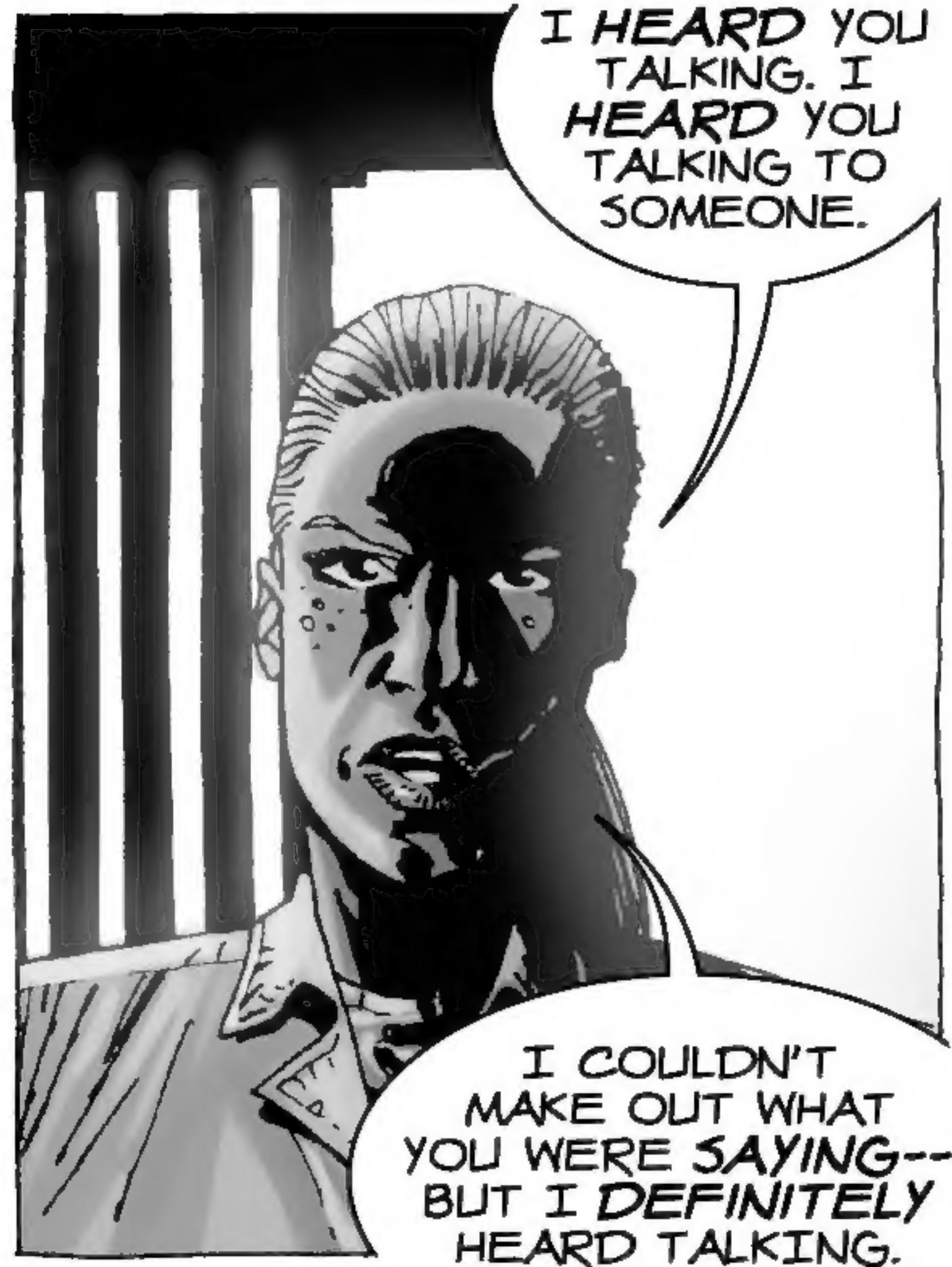
Mia MacHatton Lauren McCubbin
Accounts Manager Art Director

Allen Hui Joe Keatinge Jonathan Chan
Production Artist Traffic Manager Production Assistant



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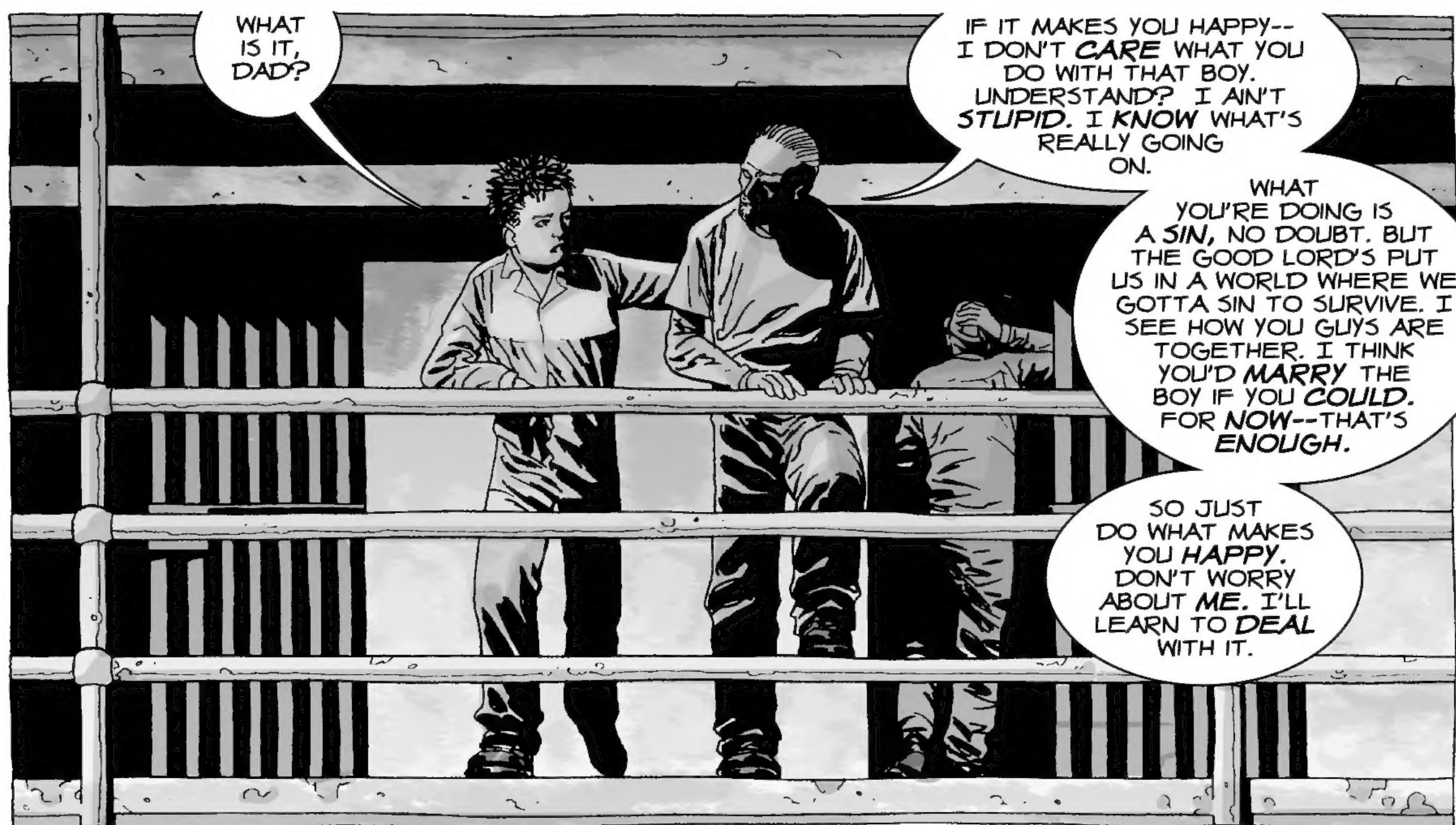
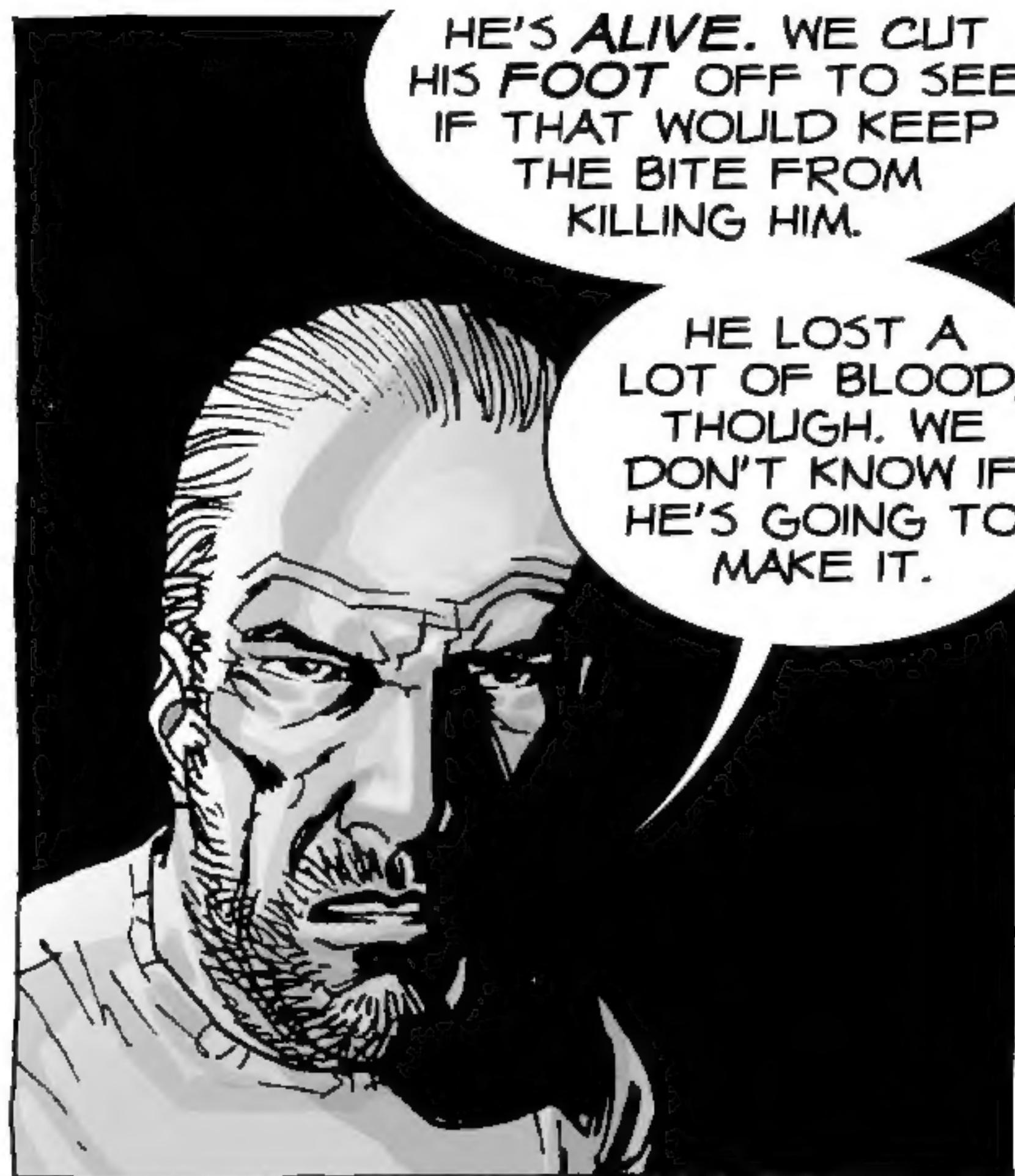
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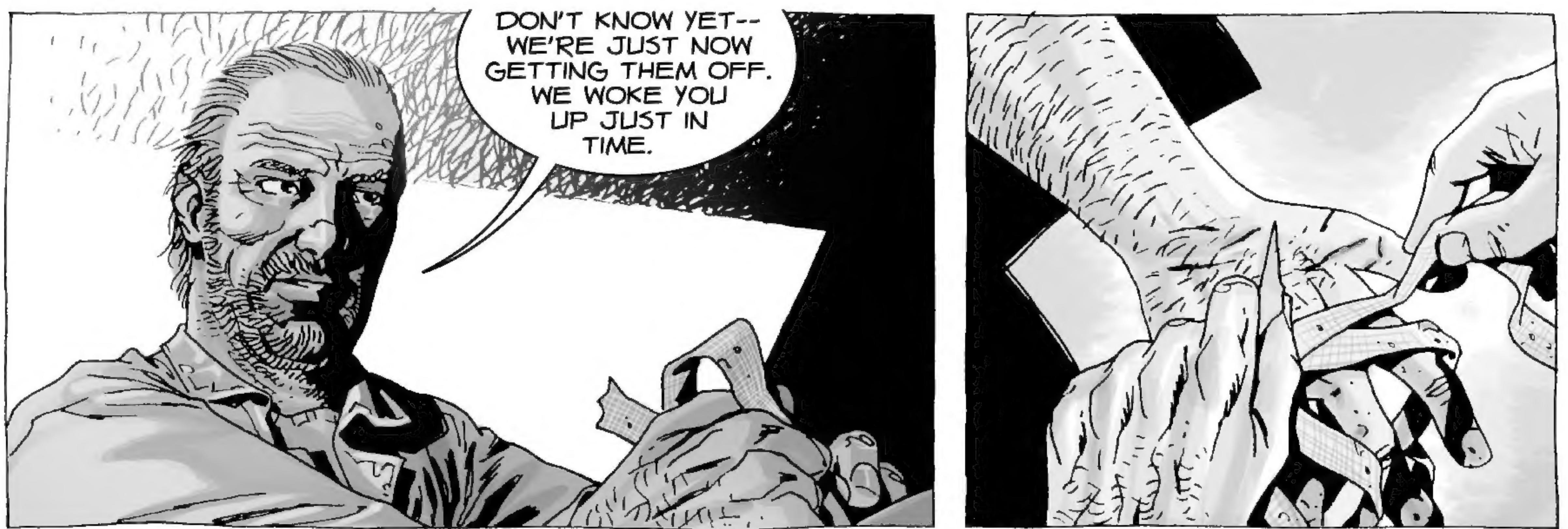


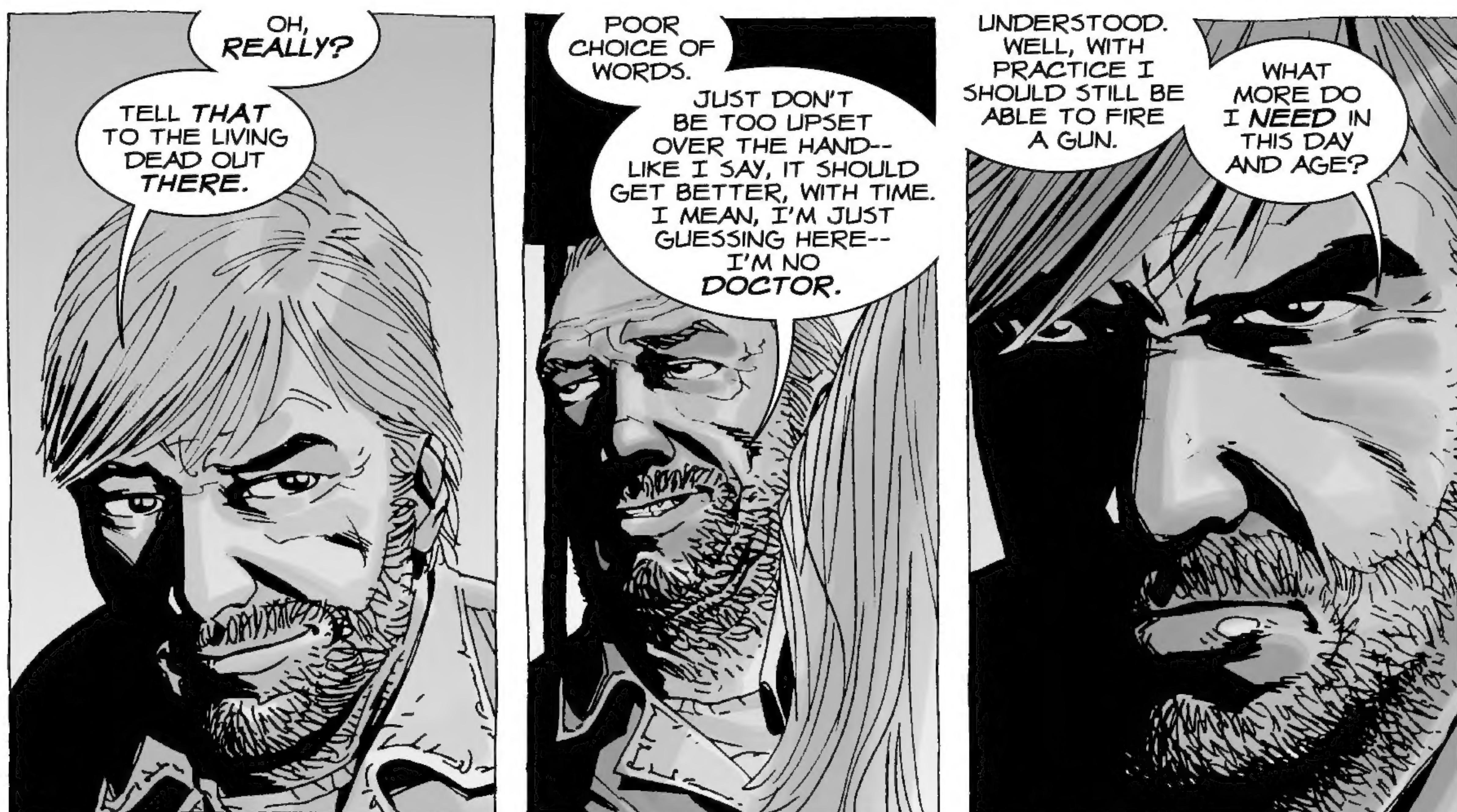
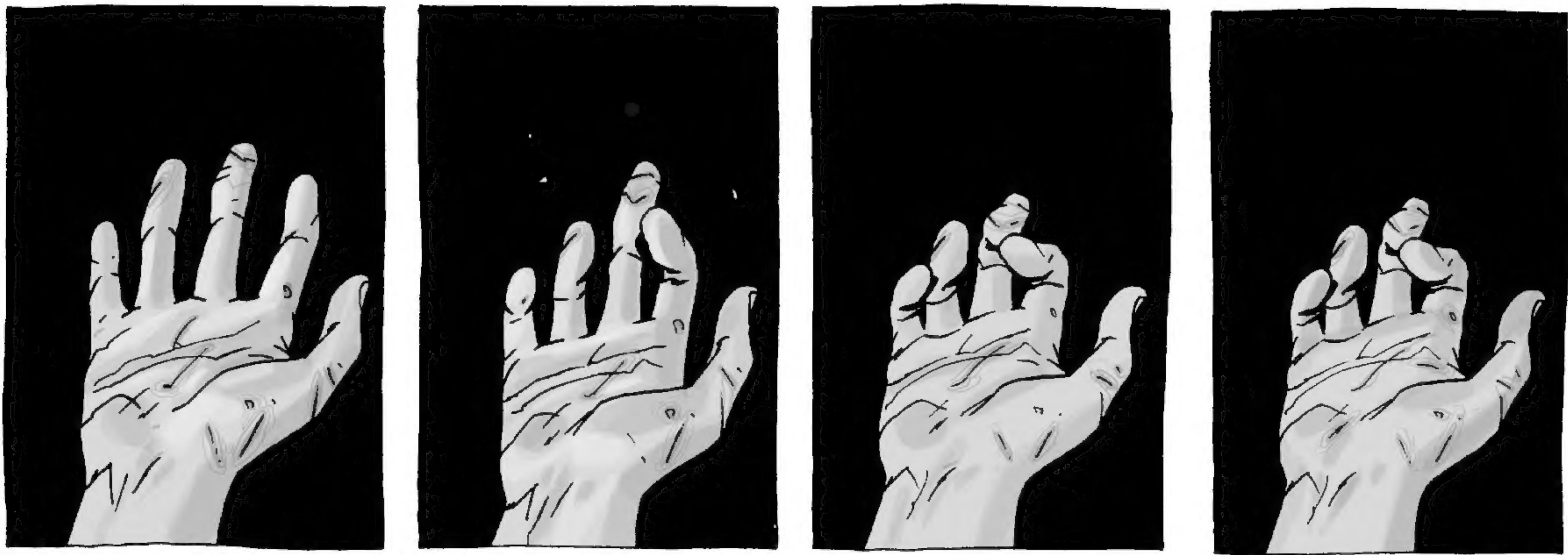






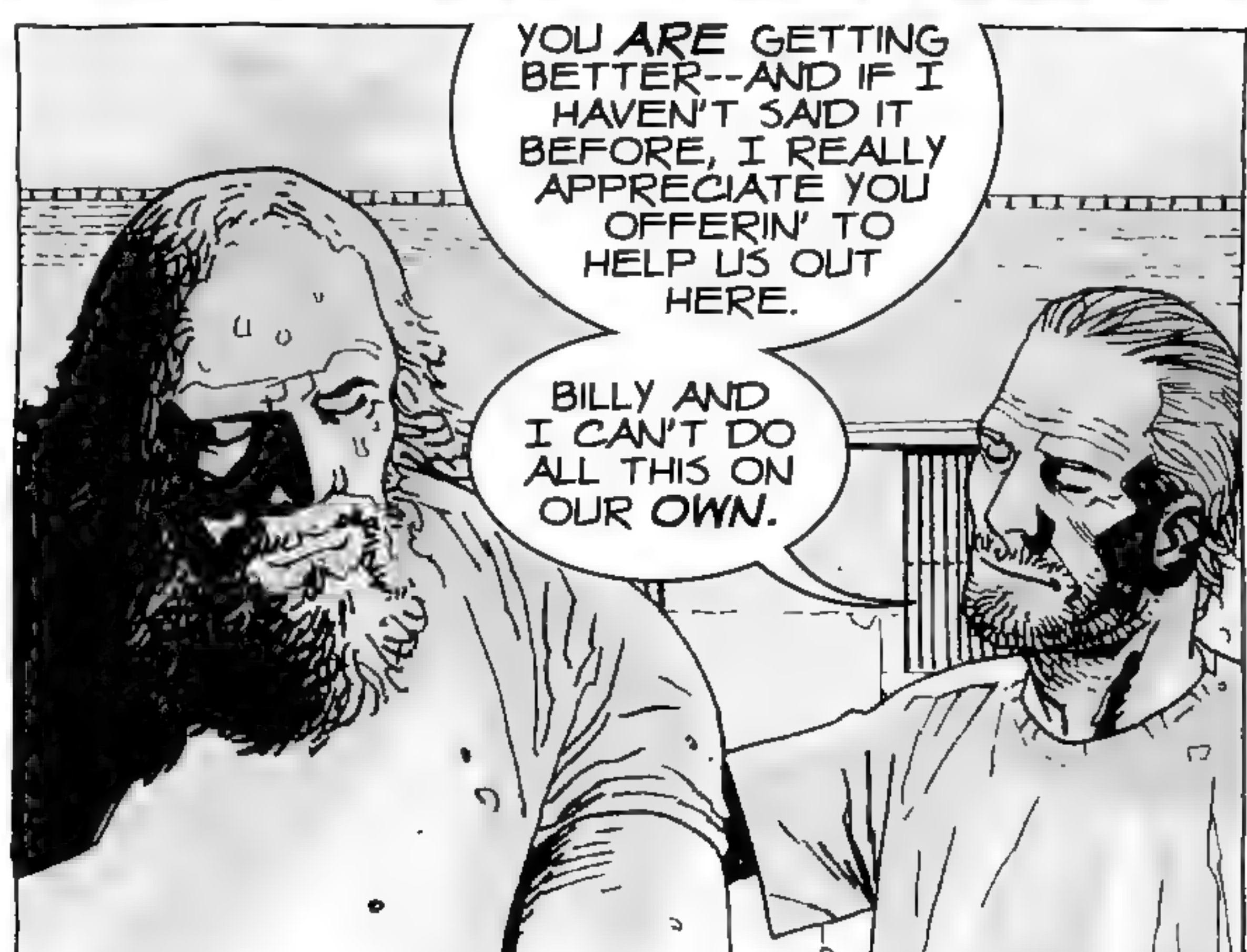


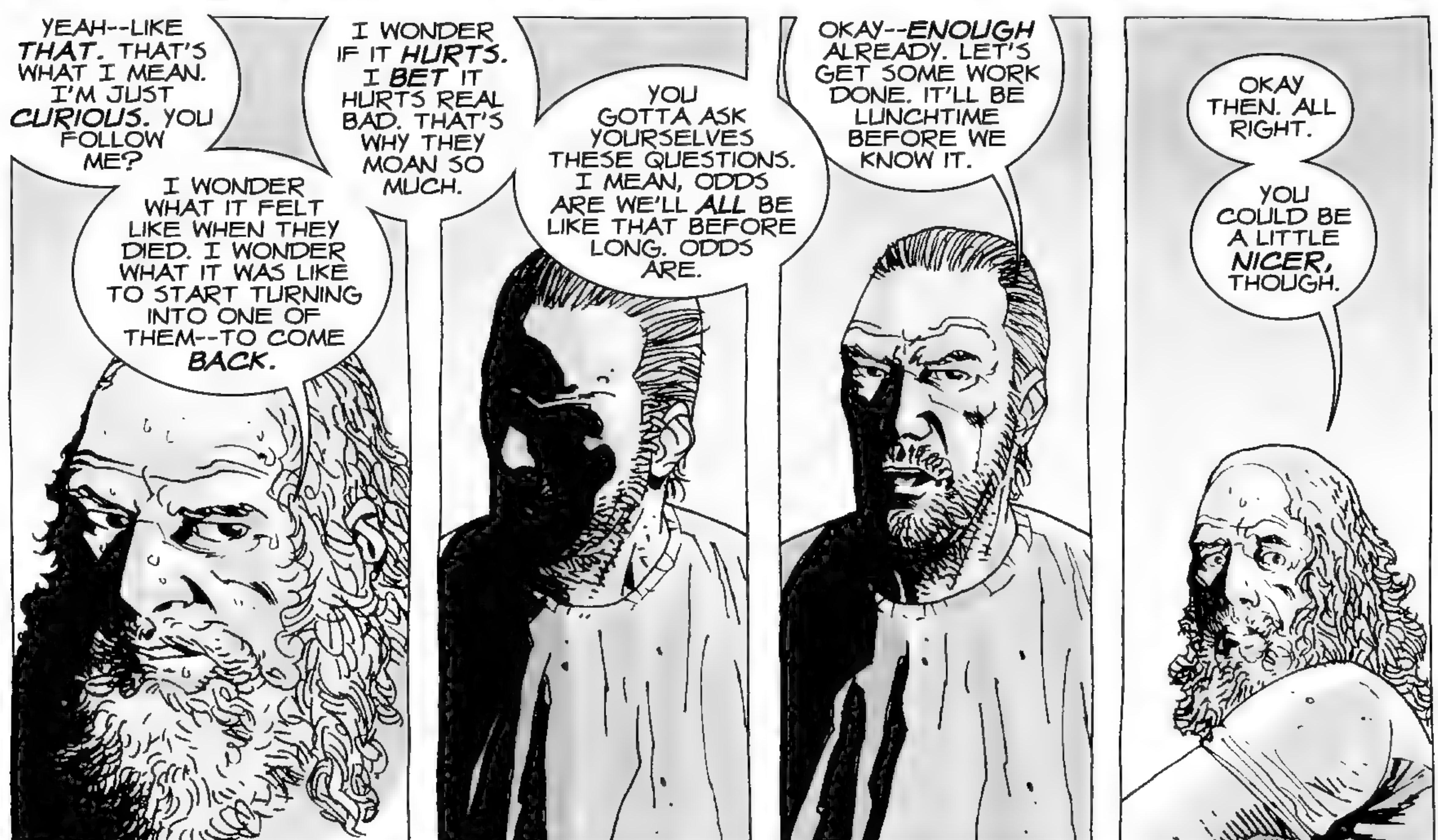
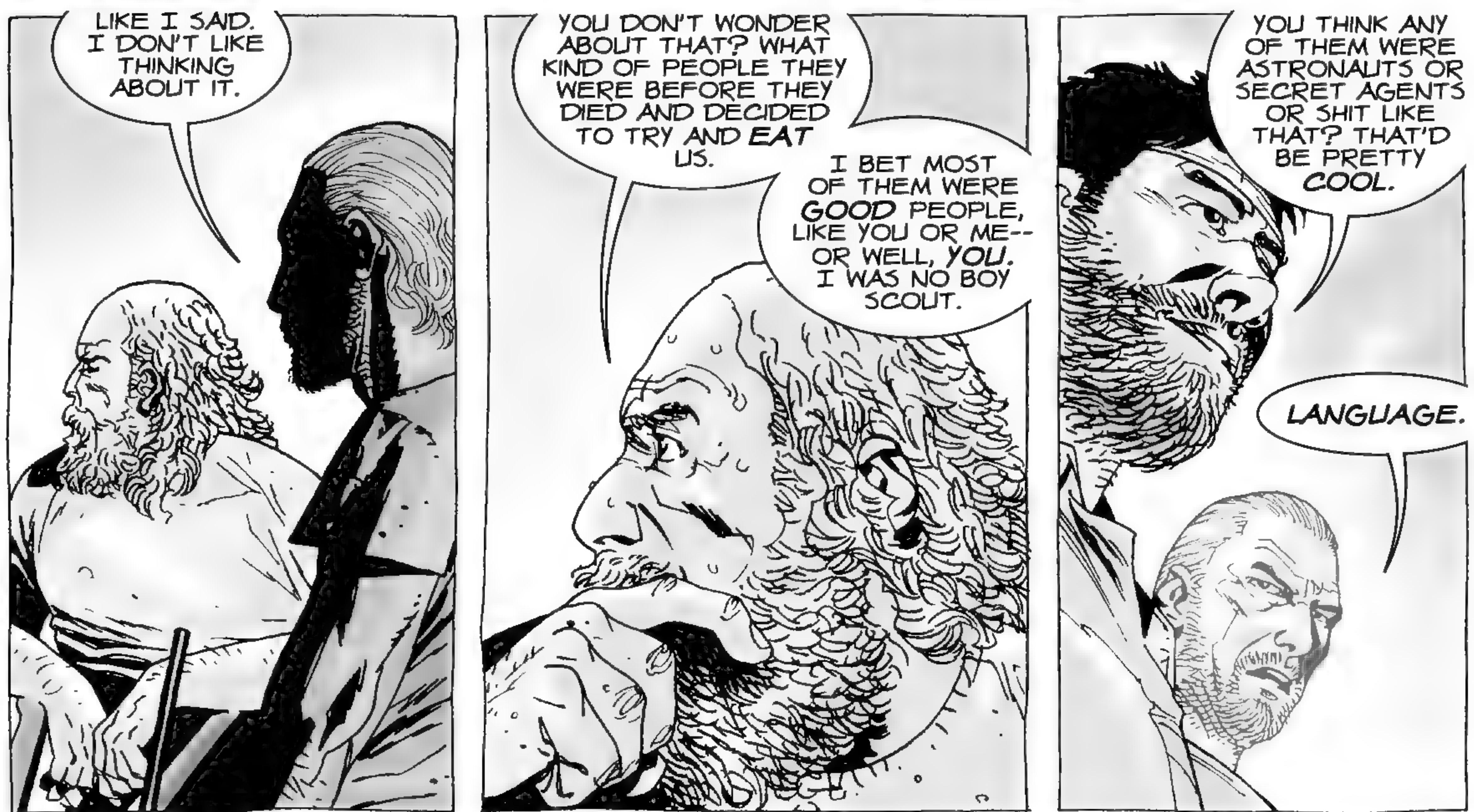
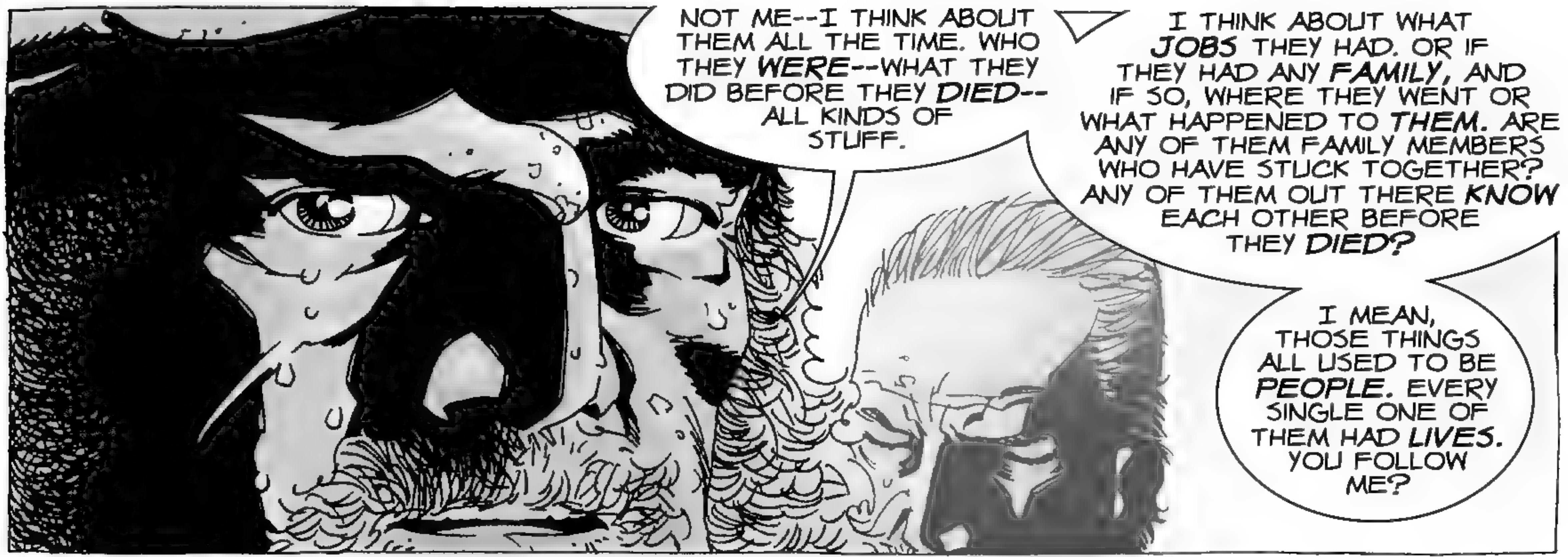


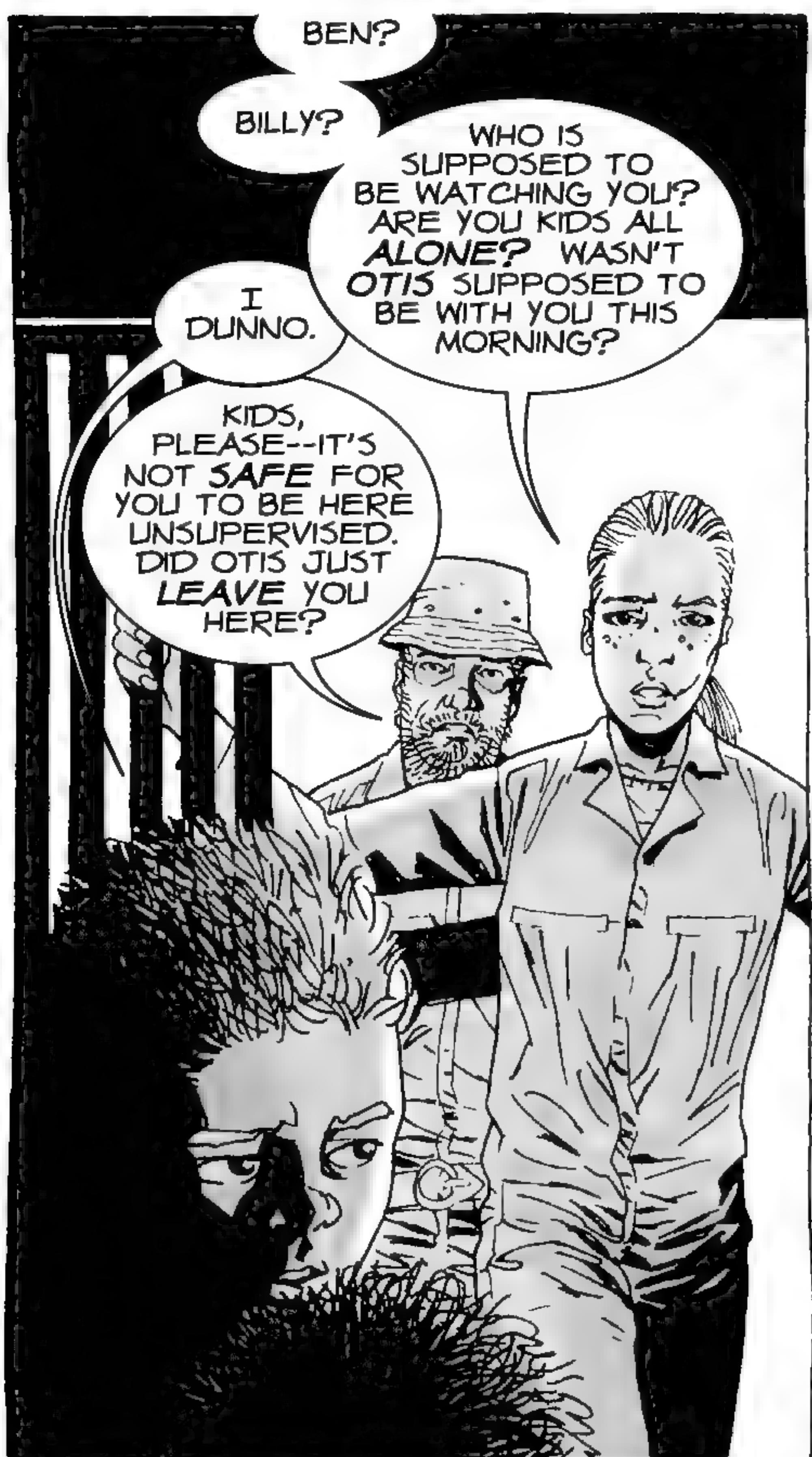




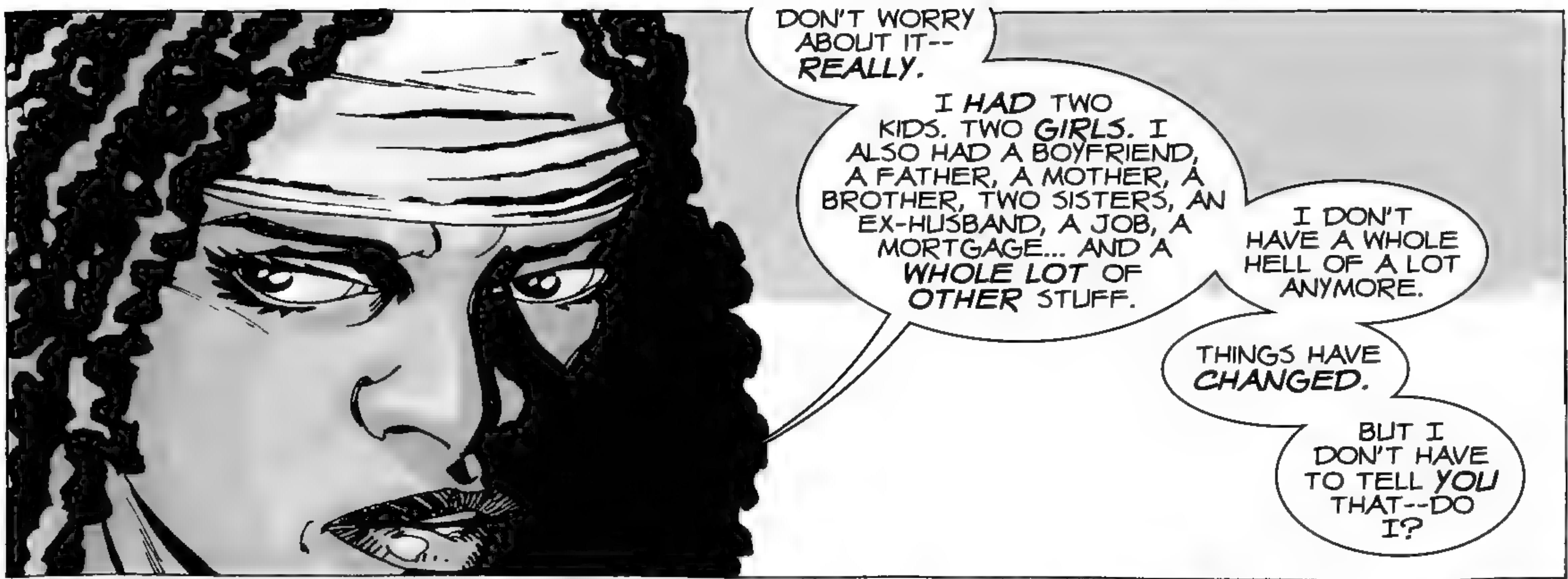












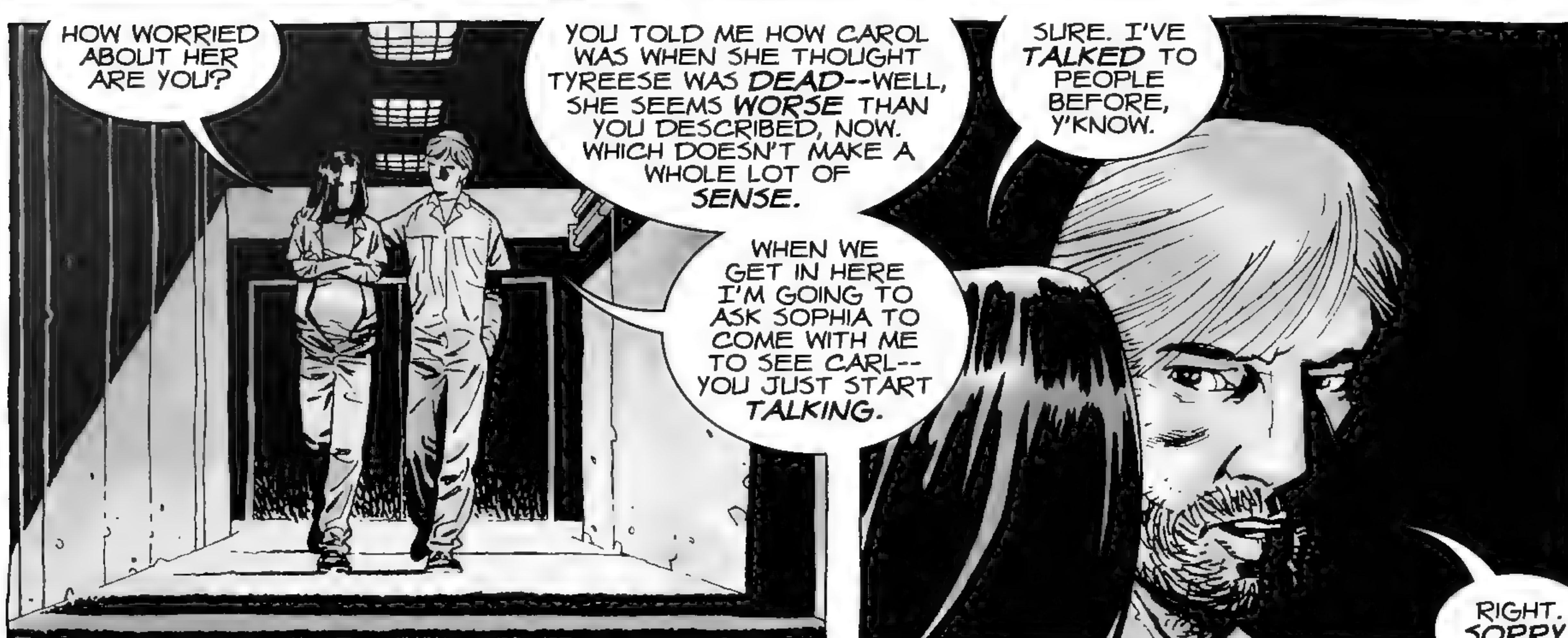
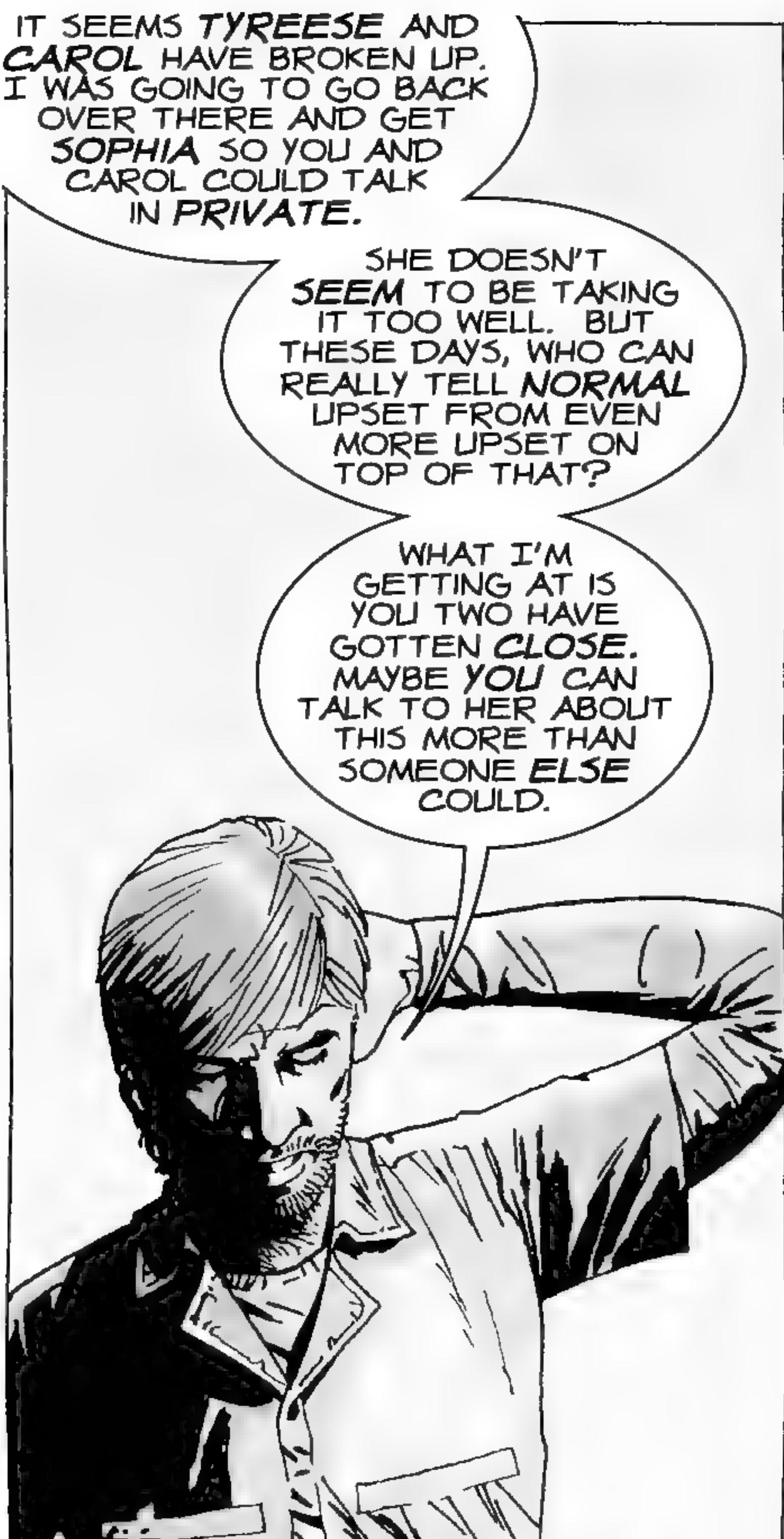
IT SEEMS TYREESE AND CAROL HAVE BROKEN UP. I WAS GOING TO GO BACK OVER THERE AND GET SOPHIA SO YOU AND CAROL COULD TALK IN PRIVATE.

SHE DOESN'T SEEM TO BE TAKING IT TOO WELL. BUT THESE DAYS, WHO CAN REALLY TELL NORMAL UPSET FROM EVEN MORE UPSET ON TOP OF THAT?

WHAT I'M GETTING AT IS YOU TWO HAVE GOTTEN CLOSE. MAYBE YOU CAN TALK TO HER ABOUT THIS MORE THAN SOMEONE ELSE COULD.

OH GOD-- I HAD NO IDEA. SURE, LET'S GO OVER THERE RIGHT NOW.

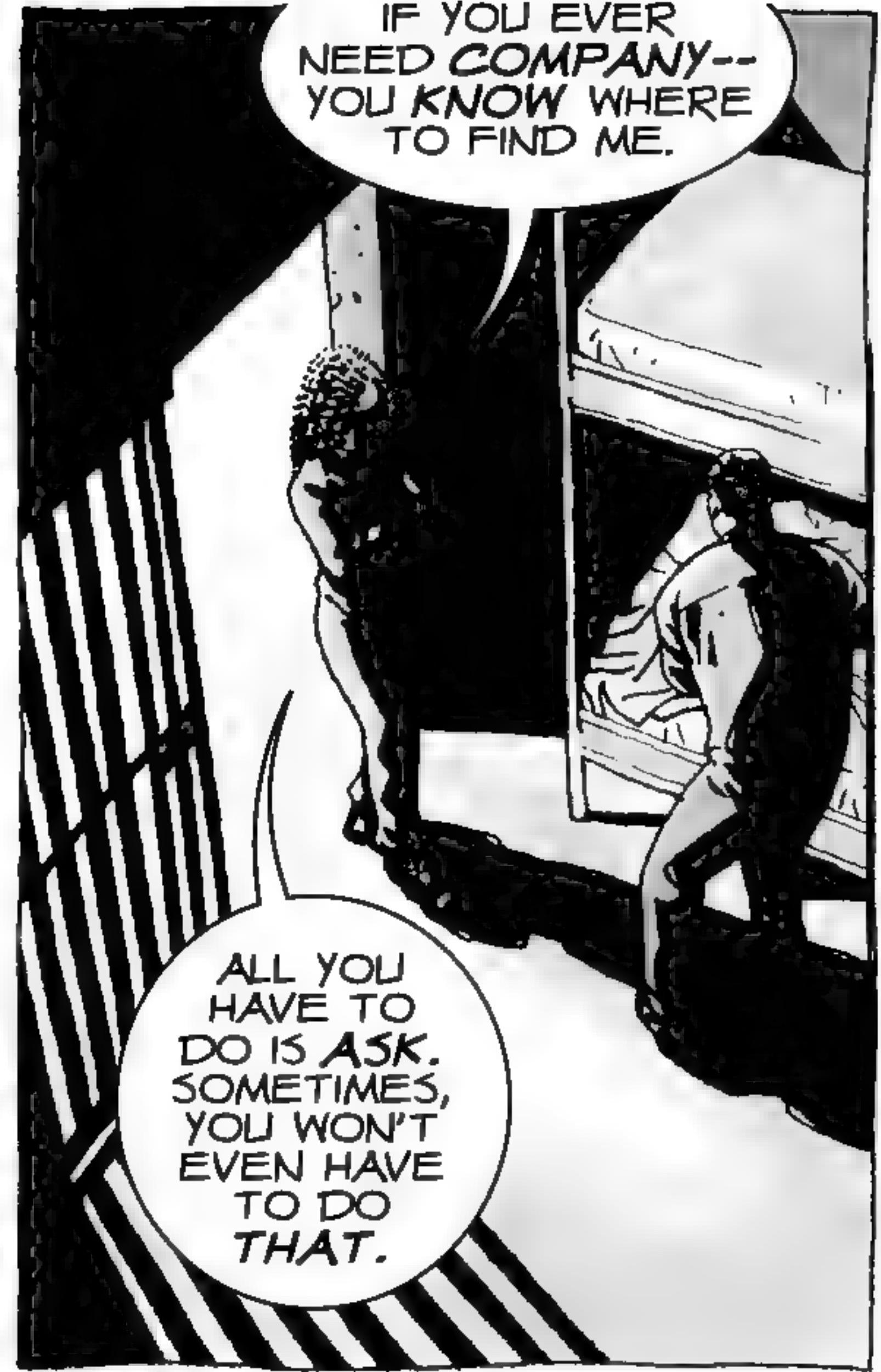
I'M STILL EATING.





OH,
GOD--!

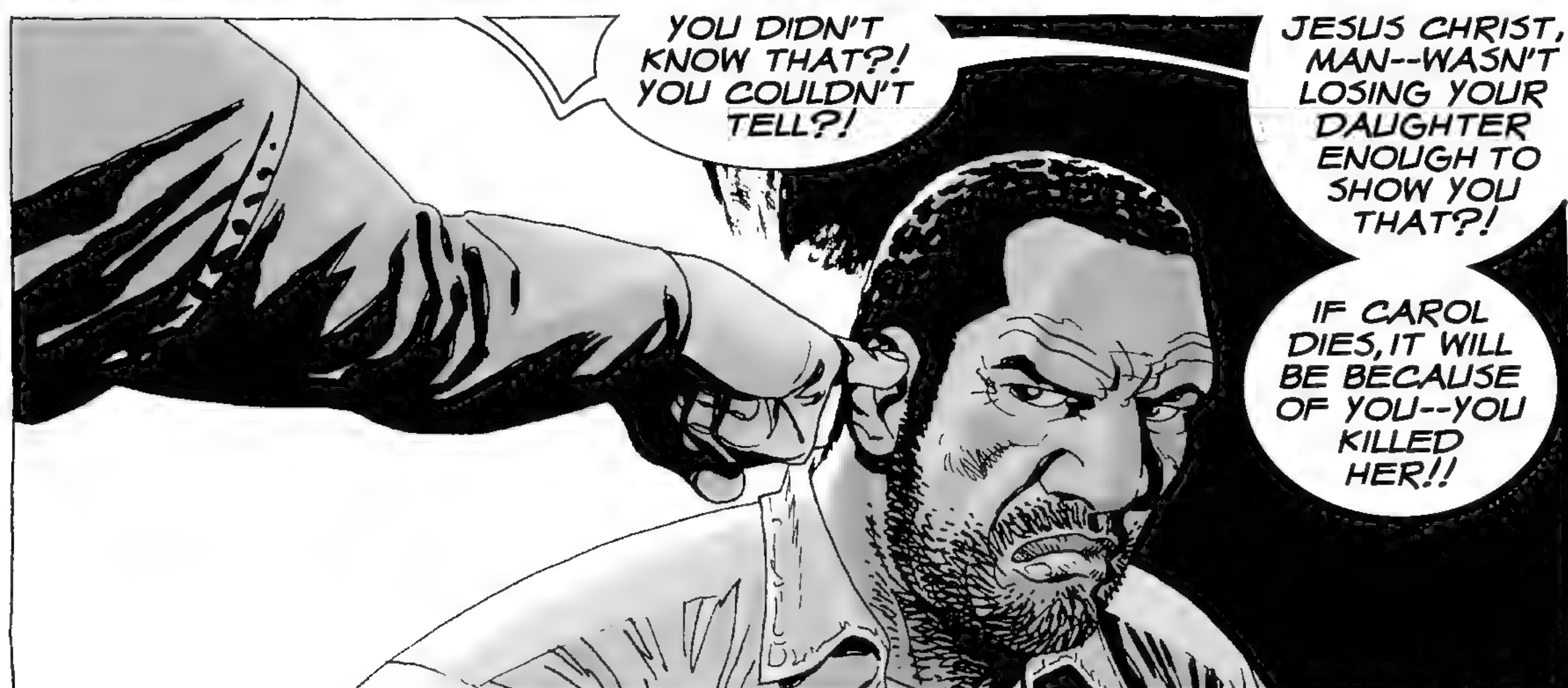
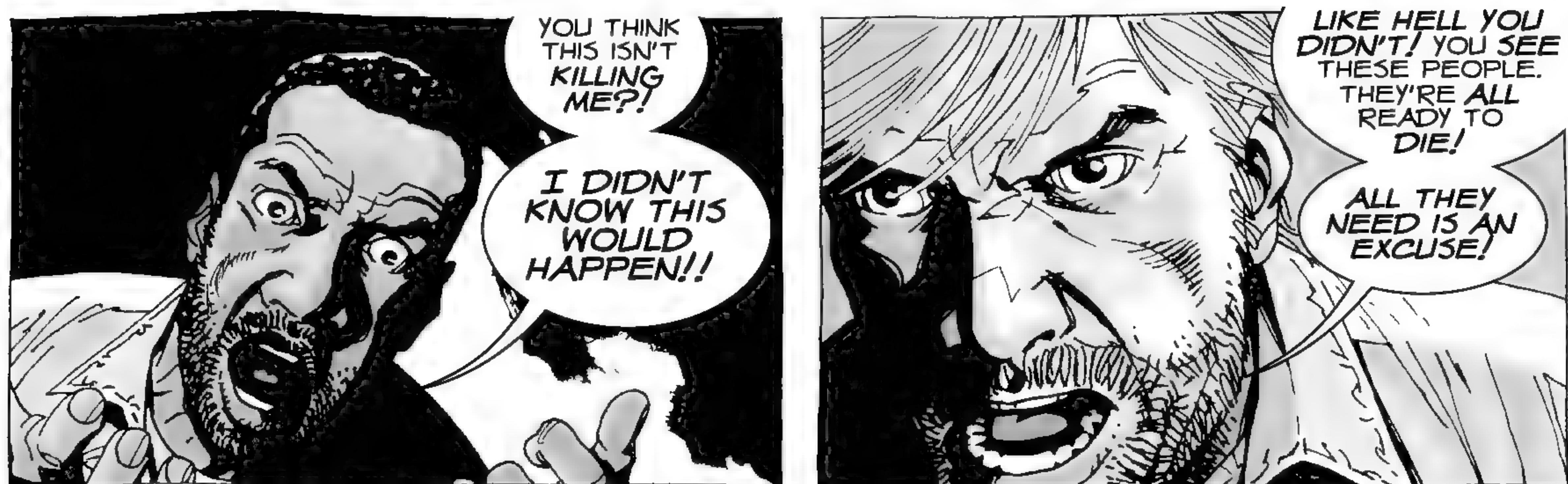
CAROL!!













LETTER HACKS

Issue 22, here she is, isn't she grand?

If any of you folks live in Tacoma, Washington and you know where Comic Book Ink is (or have a phone book and know how to get to mapquest.com) come on out to my signing on October 22nd. You can find out more information by visiting www.comicbookink.com I'm sure there's a phone number on there somewhere if you've got some questions. Come on out!

Other than that, not really much to report this month. So I guess I'll just dive right into the letters. Sound good?

Good.

Dear Kirkman,

I wrote you a letter in another book about writers not relying too much on pictures to tell the story. Issue 20 had four pages with no words other than "HUMNGH," "GUH," "RUH," and "Wow." Yet, those pages were my favorite in the book. Oh, except Allen gitting bit (finally!). Page #2 also established that even "dead" zombies can still be dangerous!

Did you guys realize that was Thomas' remains? I thought not.

Some questions and stuff:

1. Ok, so in the Extended Cut of Dawn of the Dead we discover that Peter had a brother that was a pro football player. So...?

Really? Hmmmm.

2. In Zombie King #0, we learn that zombies have other urges. Will we see any cows in TWD?

No. Not any time soon.

3. How much did Land of the Dead kick ass?

A fair bit.

4. Did you forget to look for Simon Pegg too?

No, I knew where he was and I knew where to look. So I didn't miss it. Pretty cool stuff actually.

5. Really, no smart zombies?

Nah. Sorry.

Man, zombie books everywhere. Zombie King, Dead World, Shaun of the Dead, Zombie Tales, Dead Eyes Open, Living with Zombies, and others. Keep up the good work. I wish I had more to say about each issue, but they're just so solid. Oh, thanks for biting Allen. I've been wanting him gone since before Donna. After that, I was hoping Zombie Donna would get 'em. So thanks. Here's to someone eating Otis!

Later,
Chris Pitts

Man, you really didn't like Allen? Well, I'm sorry to say that I wouldn't count him out just yet.

Hiya, Kirkman,

So, Frank Cho totally owes you a debt of gratitude. Here you are, almost two years into your zombie epic, and there are still letters talking about the similarities between your opening and the opening sequence of 28 DAYS LATER.

Not that many now, thankfully.

Obviously, Cho wanted to dodge that bullet, sat down, and decided to figure out a way to open his own zombie tale with something that would not invite similar cries. And what do we get?

A zombie fucking a cow. Umm. Wow.

Hey, you can threaten us with aliens all you want, but I don't think you've ever thrown necrobestiality at us. Get with it!

I'll get right on that.

Loved the Bendis photo at the back of issue 20. What you need to do now is stick his grinning mug over the "I" in the Image logo. You can just say you wanted to follow DC's lead since they just updated their classic bullet...

WRITE TO US AT:

THE WALKING DEAD
C/O FUNK-O-TRON
P.O. BOX 54386
LEXINGTON, KY 40555-4386

OR

WALKINGDEAD@FUNKOTRON.COM

Keep up the fantastic work!

-Ernie Cooper

Nobody wants to look at Bendis that much. Trust me.

Listen Kirkman,

Enough with the prison already lets get these people moving. Don't get me wrong I love The Walking Dead but lets see some more zombie action! By the way, are you gonna put a #0 issue just like you did with Invincible?

Danny Ardeljan

No plans for a #0 issue just yet but you never know. Now, as far as the prison goes... just keep reading. There's plenty more zombie action coming up.

Hi,

I just wanted to let you know about a problem with my Walking Dead #20 issues I received from Diamond this week. I usually don't look inside the books when I check the items in but your book is one of the few that I look forward to reading. When I read the issue I noticed that eight pages were printed twice along with another eight duplicate pages from the letters column. All of my books were printed this way. I called this into Diamond and found out that they do not have any more issues in stock but back ordered it for me. I am not sure if this is widespread but I wanted to let you know in case there were a lot of damages called in this week maybe you can get the printer to print some more. Or even worse if it is widespread and the fans catch it, you are aware of it ahead of time.

Thanks for the great comic

Steve Tafuni

This is a common printing mishap that happens a LOT on very small portions of the print runs on many books. It's happened to a lot of books over the years. Luckily, it's usually just a small portion of the print run (less than 100 copies).

OK--I think everyone needs to chill about killing Rick! Come on, he is the only anywhere near remotely trained for the stuff that's going on! Besides, having zombie hordes, a cheating wife and cheating -police partner that just happened to die at the hands of his son would wear anyone down! BTW, I think Rick was justified in taking that prisoner out---I'd have shot him in the head too!!! Anyway, loved the current Team-Up arch, esp. punisher shooting off the finger---too funny!!! Love the book and keep up the good work!

Bobby W. Chamberlain

Sorry, I'm just NOT going to print this. It's just not RANDOM enough. Please try again next time.

Here it is Wednesday (okay it's Friday), and I have read all of today's comics. Now when I finished the issue #20's contents, I was not surprised to find a recurring theme in the letters column. All these readers are saving their favorite titles to read last in their weekly stacks of comics, like it's some way to delay the satisfaction of a good lay with an array of titles to serve as a bit of foreplay before the Walking Dead. I thought, "how pathetic," then I realized that I had saved my copy of the Walking Dead until last... (that's almost as pathetic as all those people whining about Hawkeye in Bendis's letter column.)

No, it's not even close. Although, I gotta admit, I read my favorite comics FIRST and then I usually end up with a bunch of books I eventually end up forgetting to read.

Anyway, I just wanted to let you know that upon reading the first three trades of the Walking Dead, borrowing them from a friend, I have resolved myself to catch up with this zombie epic, even though I don't consider myself a zombie fanatic. Actually, I am not surprised but am thrilled to hear of the impending Walking Dead hardback...(hope there is a Charlie sketch included in each, maybe some of your scripts) But since I am not a zombie enthusiast, I wondered why I like this series so much. I collect 20 titles or so a month and one thing is recurrent...it is just the same as taking a step back and looking at the variety of titles that I collect. Powers,

Daredevil, Runaways, Walking Dead, Young Avengers, Astonishing X-Men... a variety of things going on in each title. I just think that the world of superheroes needed a black, white, and gray Zombie-Human-Survivist-Horror-Epic to stir things up a bit. Just like Image did way back when they started and continue to do today. The variety and events that have impacts on future events is what keeps things going...I mean when one letter column starts referencing another in the comic book industry, we've hit something. Call it a high, call it a low...who knows? But the variety is what keeps my creative vision going and my ambition as a comic fan alive. If you killed Rick (which I don't see happening) things would go on. Tyreese is just as worthy to be the center of the book, as is any number of the other characters. That is the beauty of this book. Take them where you will...we will follow like the mindless hoard you command in the book.

Daniel Guy

P.S. Any chance that Bendis can convince you to take over Daredevil when he leaves? Maybe that suggestion I gave him that he should blackmail you into doing it will work. Think about it.

Bendis was going to hand me the baton, but I was off in the bathroom. It went to Brubaker by default... because he was on the panel with Brian. Sucks to be me.

Bobby Kirkman and family?

I just wanted to say your book is awesome! I came across something on the internet that I believe would make your book better (if possible). Go to www.eathufu.com for a tasty treat. It is human flavored tofu. Maybe you could have a zombie representative try to talk to Rick and tell them why they taste so good before or after the aliens land. You could even have the zombie describe the taste after you try this hufu. It would be pretty accurate.

Eric Baca

I loved you in the Hulk Movie. It's a shame you went nuts.

Holy crap dude,

Issue 20's letters page made me feel like I was experiencing Dejavu over and over again. So many of the same questions at once, that's just weird. Not only that but many fans stating the same things (even more than usual) like when they started reading, how they started reading. Just goes to show great minds think alike. (I guess ;P) I won't waste time by telling how great the book is (I've done that in two letters already :) I think Darrick Patrick is in one of my Yahell groups, He's the guy who used all caps on his words. Anyway I was thinking (still) about the latest issue two days after reading it and was putting a list of actors together who might play the roles of the characters in a Movie or HBO mini-series. You should definitely go the Mini-series route if offered a script. Anyway on to some picks. I can't think who would be in all the roles as I'm not certain of ethnic backgrounds on persons like Glenn, I believe Lori is Native American. And some were just off too quick. On to the List

RICK: Viggo Mortenson (He's got the rugged look down from Hidalgo and LOTR)

SHANE: Ben Affleck (And not cause I'd like to see him get shot twice for ruining Daredevil...well maybe...)

MORGAN: Morgan Freeman (I know he's a little old but the man can act, and make-up could take care of the rest.)

DUANE: ?

LORI: Iyari Limon (The girl who played KENNEDY in the last season of Buffy the Vampire Slayer.) you can see her here
<http://www.restlessbtvs.com/trivia/episodes/season-7/710/>

CARL: ?

JIM: Liam Neeson.

ALLEN: Oliver Platt.

Donna: Eric's mom from that 70's show.

BEN & BILLY: ? kids are to hard to cast :P

GLENN: ? still not sure of his ethnic background Asian?

DALE: Michael Caine.

Carol: Rebecca Romjin Stamos.

SOPHIA: ? Damn kids.

ANDREA & AMY: Lindsey Lohan. (They are both close enough in look and age that she could do both parts)

TYRESE: Ving Rhames.

JULIE: ?

CHRIS: Tobey Maguire.

OTIS: ?

HERSHEL: Michael Douglas.

MAGGIE: Alexa Vega.

BILLY: ?

LACEY: ?

ARNOLD: ?

RACHEL: ?

SUSIE: ?

PATRICIA: ?

AXEL: Hulk Hogan.

THOMAS: Anthony Hopkins.

ANDREW: Lil' Bow

DEXTER: Laurence Fishburn.

MICHONNE: Naomi Harris (from 28 days later)

Realistically, I doubt most of these actors would be available for a TV show. And I KNOW a normal TV budget couldn't afford them. I go with most if not all unknowns. It's more fun that way.

Best I can come up with, If they don't work just use Simon Pegg and a lot of Make-up for all the roles LOL, what's you're crack at them, or better yet who would other fans feel best fit the roles? On to some (Not so serious) questions.

1. Can we have Aliens before issue 75?

That would ruin the surprise.

2. Will your Zombies be buggering any Cows soon? (Do you know where I get this Question from?)

Fuck Frank Cho.

3. How about a Shaun, Liz, ED, WD Crossover?

Liz?

4. Will there be a copy of the "ZOMBIE SURVIVAL GUIDE" in the prison Library?

We can only hope.

5. And a Question you have NEVER been asked, WILL the Zombies stay stupid?

Yeah.

LOL...Hey, I was Just Kidding put murdering artist back on their chains... ACK!

Matt McIntyre (Scots Rule)

Oh, you were joking. Sorry.

I liked the thought that the survivors are actually doing jobs, like in normal life!!!! Picked up the Invincible #0 and the trade #1 and damn you they were great!!!! BTW, you read Zombie King yet? A cow!!!!!! That was sssssssssoooooo wrong!!!!!! Thanks for the great books!

Bobby W. Chamberlain

I think this went to the wrong email. Or better yet, did you send this email to all three books mentioned here?

Dear Robert Kirkman,

When I decided to write this letter, I knew I didn't want it to be one of those long, droning, boring letters full of endless ass-kissing and me telling you what I think you should do with your own story... So I think I've boiled it down to what I really want to tell you.

Thank you.

I really enjoy reading your book. It is my favorite title to read by far. I've been passing the trades around to anyone who will take the time to look at them... and everyone is immediately sucked into your world... They immediately get the hunger for more... So before I blabber on and on... Thank you. On behalf of my roommates and myself... Thank you.

Mike Craft
Shawnee, OK

Great, short and to the point. Thanks. Nice job. Oh, wait...

Addendum: I wanted to take this opportunity to share some of our art with you... Since you've been so kind and gracious to share yours with us. My friend Byron and I make music under the name 'Apologist' ...I suggested that we call ourselves The Walking Dead... But he wasn't as hot on that idea as I was... You could check out our website for some of our music... (<http://www.freewebs.com/apologist>) More than one song is about zombies actually... So maybe if you don't appreciate the music there's a good story to be had on at least two of the songs... Keeping kicking ass on the comic book by the way... I have absolutely no complaints with what you're doing.

Man, you were doing so well before the addendum. No WAY am I going to listen to your music NOW.

Hey guys,

First off, want to do the usual congrats for making a great fuckin' book. I must admit I was very sad to see Tony go as the main artist, as his artwork was one of the main reasons I got into this, but Charlie and Cliff are still keeping me happy. Just finished issue 20 and it's still going strong. But on to business, a friend and I found a small continuity error in issue 19. (I guess slight spoilers ahead if you haven't read 19) In it we are introduced to Michonne, the samurai sword carrying badass, and her two lovely dates (both zombies). As a condition to being let into the prison, she has to kill both of her zombie friends, which she does in a single chop. Now on the cover and frames previous they are shown without lower jaws and arms. After they are decapitated and on the ground, THEY HAVE ARMS AGAIN! This is shown in two frames. Not a very big deal, but it makes me feel smart to point out the only mistake in like 20 issues, so back off. But anyways, love the comic, keep up the good work, and welcome to the fun Rus.

-Nick Driever

Zombies grow arms when you cut their heads off. How do you think we get four-armed zombies? Stupid.

Hey Man,

Let me start off by saying that "The Walking Dead" is an amazing comic, definitely the highlight

of

the current comics offerings.

I'd like to ask you a couple of questions, if you don't mind. Firstly, I know you've said that you don't want to water down the universe by doing spin-offs and the like, but what I'd really like to see is a Walking Dead sketchbook featuring sketches by both Moore and Adlard. Surely it wouldn't take that much work as I'm sure there is already a wealth of stuff that's never been published. It would be a nice little extra to the main title and think of the extra money! ;) Also, I don't know why you get letters about Adlard's art, saying they preferred it before he joined, but to be honest I think he is a better artist than Moore. I think the book as a whole has improved since the start of the second arc. The art has got better and so has the writing. Kudos to you. Have you seen "Beyond Reanimator?" What did you think? Heh, and you certainly need more of the shower scenes! ;)

Never seen beyond reanimator.

My big request however - I am a third year BA (hons) Media Production student at Cumbria Institute of the Arts in Carlisle, England, and for one of my two major projects in my final year I have to submit a 5000 word report on a relevant topic of my choice. I have chosen to write about Comic book movies and why they are often a failure in the eyes of comic book fans and the creators of such titles. What I would like to do, if you would be so kind as to give me a few minutes of your time, is for you to write the report for me! HAHA Only joking! Seriously, if it is possible could I possibly conduct a quick interview with you via email asking you on your opinions of a few different comic films. I understand you are a very busy man what with your comics writing and the script for the Invincible film that I hear you're writing, but if this would be possible I would be very appreciative and grateful.

Thank you for your time,
Mike Swain

Sure, send me the questions. You guys see what I have to put up with? Everyone wants a piece!

I saw the movie the Undead. That movie SUCKED!! I've seen better acting in porno movies. What was the deal with "Hillbilly Jim" acting like this was the Matrix. Doing flips and firing guns in slow motion. And the aliens, I don't even know what to say about that. It was so terrible.

Long live the Walking Dead!!!!

Man, I thought Undead was a GREAT movie. I mean, if you're looking for a serious movie--it's not for you, but if you're looking for something FUN and CRAZY you can't go wrong. I think Undead is SOLID GOLD, actually. I loved it.

Hey Walking Dead crew,
Man do I love this comic. After every new issue, I'm yearning for the next. There are so many directions and possibilities you can use. Its only on issue 21 and it feels like its just at the beginning. Please at least take it to 300 issues. On to some questions:

Any chance of an issue 0 like you did with Invincible. I'd really like to see the beginning of the infestation, maybe something about Atlanta. You should really get Tony Moore to come back for it. What's he been up to? That Fear Agent looks kind of cool.

Well, you kinda already answered your question, part of it at least. Tony's been off working on Fear Agent. There are no plans at this point to do a zero issue but you never know when plans can change.

I know people keep asking about a live action Walking Dead movie or tv show. It definitely should bee an HBO original series. I'm going to try to write to someone at HBO and get some other fans to do the same. (So get to it people) I would live to see it in black and white. Nothing is scarier than black blood pouring out of the body. If the chance comes up to do so, do not let them change a thing. I'd rather not see it if you don't have creative control. Its perfect the way it is. No new characters, no getting rid of characters, no plot changes. TWD has more drama and emotion than anything on TV.

If The Walking Dead gets transferred to any other medium, TV or film... there are going to be changes. There would have to be. Don't forget, the possibility is there for changes to make it BETTER.

Any chance you and the Funkotron crew will come to Wizard World Boston?

Thanks for a great comic
Billy McEnery

No plans to be at Boston. Sorry.

Dear Mr. Kirkman

I'm about to write something you have probably never read before, especially concerning "The Walking Dead." (Yes, I've wrote to comics before, I wrote to Marvel's "Transformers" twice and "X-Men" twice, all four letters never got published, though)

I HATE horror movies. Hate them. I have a very weak stomach, so all that blood and gore just sickens me. I try to tell myself that is not real but it doesn't make any difference. I still get nauseated when I watch them. If I am interested in a movie, I have to wait for it to come to Sci-Fi Network so that I can watch the edited movie, and even then there are still some scenes that sicken me. My problem with zombie movies has been what you summed up in your prologue, that I'm always asking "What happened to..." after the movie. To me, it wasn't worth all the gore to just be left wondering why at the end of the movie.

Sissy.

Then I heard about your comic. The first ever mention of it was in the first letter page of "Marvel Team-Up" when everyone was saying how wonderful issue one was (which it was, by the way) and how "The Walking Dead" was their

favorite comic. That was high praise coming from such accomplished writers. Then I saw some places online that kept talking about how this was a great book and should be everyone's "Must Read" list. Even with all this praise, I was still skeptical. I mean, I HATE horror movies, how could I enjoy a "Horror Comic?" So I finally decided what the hell and picked up the first trade.

I couldn't put it down. I reread it three times. I was just fascinated by how the book focused on character development, not zombie mayhem. I immediately went out and picked up the second trade and pre-ordered the third. Luckily, one of my local comic shops happened to have issues 13-16 (the current issue at the time), so I picked them up and have since added "The Walking Dead" to my pull list. This comic is the best comic on the market

right now, and I'm glad I'm finally on board to read it each and every month.

Okay, I take back the "sissy" remark.

I just finished issue 20 and I'm amazed how the story just keeps me guessing every month. Just when I think that I know what is coming, you throw me a curve instead of that fastball and just leave me dumbfounded at the plate. Enough with the cliffhangers, okay? Don't you think you have tortured us poor readers (not to mention your poor characters) enough? As 20 draws to a close we have Allen being bitten and Tyreese and Dale finding a generator. Will Allen survive? Will the generator work? Tune in next month, same Bat Time, same Bat Channel.

I have a few questions/suggestions:

1. I've been thinking about Chris Pitts statement that Tyreese was bitten and have come to the conclusion that he wasn't. I would think that since he's been back, Carol and he have had sex. As panicky as she seems, I would think that if anything about him was different she would have drawn attention to it. Besides, when he returned in issue 17 he had his shirt off and there were no bite marks.

2. I think Allen will survive. His bite seems bad, but not life threatening. Amy had her neck bitten, Donna had her face bitten off, and Hershel's kids all had their necks bitten. Jim's bite was not life threatening, however, it was a huge chunk of skin taken off. I think that Jim's wound could have been treated and he died (if he died) of bacterial infection due to exposure. I think that Allen will want to die, but he won't. The group will find some antibiotics at the prison, treat his wound with them, and he will survive, which will make him more depressed (He has had a death wish since Donna's death).

3. I have come to the conclusion that you are a Minnesota Vikings fan. You see, in the early 90's they made a trade with the Dallas Cowboys where they got Hershel Walker and the Cowboys got the draft pick that they used to draft Emmitt Smith. Either that, or a guy named Hershel used to beat the shit out of you at school. Why else would you create a character named Hershel just to torture him so? I mean, the man's family (except for two kids) have been wiped out in the most horrific ways. I'm pretty sure his last son will be killed soon and Maggie is going to get pregnant by Glenn, just to torture him more and make you feel better.

I only know one guy named Hershel, and he's a nice guy. Hershel in the book is just an unlucky dude... to say the LEAST.

4. You have hinted that contact with either the military or government is coming soon. I'm hoping when this happens, they will have an explanation for what caused this plague. I know that you have stated that you think by revealing what caused people to turn into zombies, it will somehow cheapen the book. I disagree. I think it would satisfy a lot of fans curiosity. I propose that you put it to a vote. Ask your readers to vote on whether or not they want the cause revealed. I assume that there are many who feel the way I do and would vote for it. Just consider it. It's not like if you don't reveal the cause I'm going to stop reading the book. I'll only stop reading when Lori's baby turns out to be some Shane/Zombie/Alien mixture.

I'm not going to be putting it to a vote any time soon. I have no plans to ever reveal the origin of the zombies.

Again, I can't say enough how much I love this book. I look forward to the twists and turns every month. Keep up the good writing and you will have a faithful reader until the end of this book (which I hope isn't anytime soon).

Sincerely,
James E. Ragan

No plans to end the book for a good long time. I promise.

Mr. Kirkman,

Just read the latest issue of WD-20. Loved it. It's the kind of book that just makes you keep coming back for more. This book reminds me of film director Quentin Tarantino and Garth Ennis' comic series PREACHER. Why do you ask? Well, let me tell you:

1) Terrific dialogue. All three of you have a pretty good ear for dialogues. Although, I have to admit that you haven't reached Mr. Ennis' flair and use of creative cussing yet, but you're getting there.

I'll try to work in more creative cussing as the book goes on.

2) Shock value. Both Mr. Tarantino and Ennis know how to shock people and milk it for all it's worth. People read PREACHER just to see how far Mr. Ennis and Dillon would go. You, Mr. Kirkman, have "Cliffhanger" endings. You build up the characters in the story, make us care about them, and leave their fate in dire situations to be continued in the next issue. Which, I'm sure, leaves us readers cursing in frustration and suffering from sexual impotence until 30 days later the new issue of WD comes in. (Yeah - WD is a great way to get laid! Women just love flesh-eating zombies-just kidding.)

Did you just say... "sexual impotence?" I mean--REALLY? If the book is causing THAT problem I WANT you to quit, sales be DAMNED!

I do have to say that you lucked out with Mr. Adlard. I remember his work from The X-FILES. Damn, those were the good ol' days, eh Mr. Adlard? I do hope he's here to stay until WD-75.

Personally, I hope he stays on AFTER issue 75.

I do wonder if you're planning to address the issue of what caused the virus that turns people into zombies? My theory is, it's an airborne virus that turns dead tissues into living dead tissues. As being bitten by zombies is not the only way to turn into a zombie as you have indicated several issues ago. Which makes the title WD rather appropriate. You can't cure the disease unless you know the cause, only treat them as they may say in Control for Disease Centre.

Do you plan on a second volume of WD after number 75? I know that you have indicated before in your letter columns that you'd like WD to be around

Being realistic, we both know the odds are against WD from being around forever. Can you imagine the odds of Dave Sim doing 300 issues of CEREBUS and actually achieving it? What if he had a heart attack, or been in a crippling car accident, or a debilitating illness? To beat those odds and reach the goal that took Mr. Sim over 27 years to reach is amazing, but not everyone can do it.

Mr. Larsen might be able to do 300 issues of SAVAGE DRAGON, if he'd just get back to doing the book monthly since he's 29 issues short of the half-way mark. You, Mr. Kirkman, have an even longer way to go, besides nothing lasts forever. The readers are a fickle audience, we can get bored of a series and move on to a new one, or get eaten by zombies before the next issue of WD.

Well, I'd just be happy to make it to 100. That said, I think I'm younger than both Larsen and Sim were when they started their books. Well, Larsen at least, Sim was probably pretty young. Anyway, I'm going to go as long as I can with this. And I think Adlard is on board for the duration, at least for the foreseeable future. So we'll see how long the thing goes. With sales what they are now, I can say for pretty much certain that we'll make it to issue 50 unless things take a DRASTIC turn. To this day, though, sales still go UP with every issue.

Good luck anyway, on reaching WD-75. I hope to be around that long to see you and Mr. Adlard reach that goal. It might be interesting to see another vantage point-of-view of WD. Say either from a zombie POV or what's life like in Europe, Africa, and so on. So far we've only know what's like in America (but not Canada!).

See ya around, and keep up with the good work.

Yours sincerely,
Tom Fitzpatrick

P.S. Just love the letter column. There's so few around anymore. So that's is what BENDIS looks like with hair. Jeez, does he ever look ugly?!? No wonder he's bald. Nice way of getting revenge. ;-)

Well, I hear Brian has something planned that's going to be pretty bad. I may have opened Pandora's box here. I'm pretty sure I'm going to live to regret printing that picture.

Dear Funk Gang,

Your comic sucks and I hate you. (Just kidding)

I wanted to share some quick praises, observations, and zombie thoughts.

Issue #19 had a really great and creative cover. I was glad to see a sword and the nice "zombie control" devices that were utilized. I often thought to myself long ago "If I were ever in a zombie ruled world, I would definitely have a sword on me. In case I run out of ammo, this would do the trick". I would probably carry a European Falchion sword instead of a Samurai sword though... Issue #20 was really nice, especially the opening scenes showing the going's on of zombies. There was some nice comic, if not provocative observations by studying their movements and reactions. Plus it was great to get away from the human characters for a moment.

Speaking of zombie observations, I wanted respond to your comments regarding my last letter. I was the one who brought rigormortis and how it would constrict the muscles, causing problems for zombie movement. You responded by saying, and I quote "...you can't pick or choose what's realistic and what's not...and "...it's all throw out the window..". Oh really? Hmm...let's see what you have chosen for what zombies can and cannot do....

1. Anyone who dies turns into a zombie.
2. Anyone who is bitten by a zombie dies, then turns into a zombie (a la Romero)
3. Zombies attack the living and want to bite and/or devour them (a la everybody)
4. Zombies apparently attack animals, like deer and horses (a la twisted Kirkman)
5. Zombies are slow moving and slow witted (Romero and Kirkman)
6. Zombies can recognize humans by smell
7. Zombies can recognize humans talking or making noises (according to issue 19).

8. Zombies can see and hear and smell

I may have missed a few, but here is my point. We all pick and choose in fantasy. What we want a zombie to do in a movie, comic book, or whatever is up to us. However, if zombies could really become reality and the dead could come back to life, nature will pick and choose. Maybe the dead can come alive, but would be unable to walk, or make noises. Maybe they would decay and crumble apart while attempting to walk. So once again I say, "zombies can't happen", but I guess in the fantasy world we could even make them sprout wings and fly.

One last point here. It is interesting that if a person is brain dead, their body can go on living for at least a short period of time. If their heart stops, then the body dies almost immediately (then rigormortis sets in and then decay). Okay its question time:

In one of the early issues, Rick and Glenn proved to us in

Atlanta that you can trick a zombie's sense of smell and make them think you are a zombie. Rick and Glenn were talking up a storm though, and the zombies apparently did not notice. In issue #19, we see the new girl reacting with a vocal grunt to a situation and a zombie nearby reacts to it. So can your zombies recognize human voices or not?

Rick and Glenn were covered in goo. Whether it was sense of smell or not that masked their presence really well in Atlanta. It could have been the fact that they were covered in goo that could have looked like wounds therefore making the zombies THINK they were zombies. Michonne moved around freely with her two zombie companions. Again, this may be because they masked her smell and may not be. But when the zombie reacted to her, it's not clear if it was going to attack or not, Michonne killed it before it had the chance. Clearly there's a wide range of things that would get the attention of a zombie. I should also note that it doesn't have to be the same with all zombies. Not all people react the same way to things and not all zombies would either.

Okay, Robert. Now for some really pointless questions:

1. Are you a night owl?

Early bird I suppose. I get up at a decent hour far more often than I stay up late... but I do stay up late and work on occasion.

2. Have you seen the 1980's Italian zombie flick called "Gates of Hell"? If not, you should check it out. Very strange premise: Vampire-like creatures can turn you into zombies if you look at them. The way humans turn into zombies in this picture is absolutely horrific. I won't ruin it here if you want to see for yourself what happens to them. I actually saw this in the theater.

Never seen it--but I will NOW.

Okay this is my last thoughts, but mainly to the artists. I want to see variety with the zombies. No more bald, jean wearing zombies for awhile. Here are some suggestions:

1. Costumed zombies (give us a Romero clown or something)
2. Cowboy zombies (we're in Georgia correct? Surely some ranchers with cowboy hats are roaming around)
3. Zombie kids
4. Women zombies
5. Fat zombies

'Til the next (rigormortis-free) zombie attack,
Tracy Kent

While I will admit, there have been a fair share of bald shirtless zombies, there have been others. Plenty of others. Look at the opening scene of issue 20. You'll see women and children zombies. That said, we'll see if Charlie can't do some more unique zombies. Although, football player and clown zombies in the Romero flicks always bugged me.

Greetings Mr. Kirkman,

I read in a newspaper recently that TWD had been picked up by HBO to develop as a series? Any truth to that? If so, congrats are truly in order, and if handled as well as the other HBO shows, it is sure to be a hit. If not, well, I was hopeful and duped, but what a great idea.

I'd like to know what newspaper reported THAT. I mean, I'd really like for the comic to be picked up by HBO but I'm telling you, as the guy who would know--it HASN'T been.

As a long-time zombie-film aficionado, I must say your book almost outdoes them all; much better than most zombie films, even some considered "classics"; don't get me wrong, I love even the worst zombie exploitation flick out there passionately, but I would say your book is way up there with the original Dawn of the Dead, and perhaps even better than Fulci's Zombie. It definitely beats uncle George's latest opus, which was unfortunately rather disappointing. Time to move on.

Been with you since issue #1, and I certainly don't plan on stopping. Keep up the mesmerizing work, it's really now up to you to show the world how it's done.

Sincere regards,

M. Roy

PS. any TWD merch on the way? Just curious.

We have plans to do SOME merchandise--exactly WHAT is still be decided. Of course, you'll hear it here first.

Dear Letter Hacks:

Sorry, long time, no write. No excuse, either.

Even if it isn't explained HOW zombies came to be in Walking Dead, there seem to still exist rules. I've given it a lot of thought and tried to see where it may differ from other zombie stuff, including the Romero zombie rules it APPEARS to be predicated upon. Let me know if I'm just flat-out wrong about any of it:

- 1) If you die, you become a zombie.
- 2) If you are bitten, you die faster. It makes you sick.
- 3) If you act fast enough, you might be able to prevent getting sick from a zombie bite. You need to keep it from spreading through your blood stream so the only answer is amputation and fast.

This one is yet to be confirmed.

4) The only way to stop a zombie is by destroying its brain.

5) Zombies decay at different rates due to outside factors such as weather, state of the body at time of death and possibly, whether or not they eat.

The eating thing is speculation. It has yet to be revealed if they get any benefit from eating.

6) Zombies can smell death and decay and ignore it.

Suspected, but not yet proven.

7) Zombies are attracted to motion.

8) Zombies bite and eat a bit but in general have no interest in digesting or eating all of their meal.

I think it's been shown that they usually eat until something is gone or they've been interrupted.

9) Different zombies have different patterns. Some stay still and wait for something to come by. Some roam out on their own. Most congregate together.

10) They move slowly.

The rest of these seem fine.

We can also guess at some things that the zombies in Walking Dead may do:

1)
They will eat animals as well as people, but the animals do not seem to become zombies.
2) They may vaguely recall what they did during life and emulate it. Congregating in cities, maybe more.
3) Their blood, at least in small quantities, does not seem to be a contagion, as our heroes have fought them hand-to-hand many times and would likely have gotten zombie blood in their eyes or in their mouth or in their cuts.

You can take a shower without water getting in your eyes and mouth. I don't think any of the characters have ingested zombie blood yet. I would imagine that would make them pretty sick.

Questions about the Walking Dead zombies.

- 1) Do they need to eat to keep going?
- 2) Can they communicate at all?
- 3) Do they want just flesh or brains?

While I far prefer the attention paid to our regular characters, I'd love to see the zombies' nature examined in further depth down the road. One thing almost all zombie films approach at some point is the characters trying to learn if there is a cure. There might not be, but with all the time they have to kill, you have to figure they'd think about it A LOT.

Keep up the great work. This is a great title.

Chris Piers

I still maintain that realistically finding a "cure" would be at the bottom of these character's "to do" lists. Staying safe and staying alive is more important than trying to figure out a way to stop the spread of zombie whatever. Also, they don't have equipment or know how to do this. They may eventually run into someone who does, though....

Mr. Kirkman,

Well, it's been many a year since last I wrote a letter to a comic series. I grew up on comics and the late eighties/early nineties was truly a fun time to be a young letterhacker and it was my pleasure to contribute to letter pages with the likes of Uncle Elvis, Charlie Novinskie, Mark Lucas and Malcolm Bourn. But like everything else, it seemed that the various titles became uninterested in actual opinion pieces and instead wanted mindless praise for half-assed work. This trend proved to be the end of my letterhacking days.

Then I came across THE WALKING DEAD thanks to Wood, a friend a fellow zombie fan. Aside from the obvious of it being a damn good zombie story, the thing that drew me in even more was your letters page. Unfortunately, it seems a strong letters section for comics as a whole has become a thing of the past, which makes the few titles such as yours stand out all the more.

Having made it to the San Diego Comic Con this year I was disappointed to not have met you personally, but at least this has given me reason to write, and for that I should thank you as well.

Sincerely,
Marson Fedrick

I'm sorry if you missed me at Comic-Con this year. I was being pulled in all kinds of different directions and didn't get to spend nearly as much time at my own booth as I would have liked. I should be there again next year. Hopefully I'll be there to meet you. Now, if you just didn't find the time to get over to my booth... fuck you, buddy. Fuck you.

Dear Mr. Kirkman,

Never before in my life did I ever think that I would love reading comic books. I always thought that comics were nerdy and all about super heroes. But when my friend introduced me to your comic The Walking Dead, I completely fell in love with it. It is really hard for me to put the darn thing down. Anything can happen to anyone of the characters, no one is safe. That is what I love about it. I can't tell you how many times I was socked when I turned the page. I love it!! You should really think about putting out some kind of merchandise, like... maybe mini posters, t-shirts, playing cards. Anything would be wonderful!!

Also is there any chance that you will have some kind of singing here in Lexington, I would love to have you sign one of my Walking Dead comics.

Thanks,
L. Williams

I've done two signings in Lexington so far, both at A+ Collectables on Southland Drive. (this is Lexington, KY we're talking about, folks). I'm sure I'll be doing another sometime soon. Possibly at one of the other stores in Lexington.

I've never written to a comic book before, but Paul Shinn's letter in #20 (excellent issue, by the way--poor old Allan!) inspired me. The Littlest Hobo is a television show in which a dog travels around the country, stopping in one place every episode, usually to befriend some disabled kid and help him solve some local crime involving dastardly property developers or the like.

Unlike Lassie or Skippy the Bush Kangaroo however, Hobo was characterized by a tendency towards being utterly bloody depressing because the dog would bugger off during the climax of the episode, usually while no one was looking, and the little disabled kid would be all "where's my new friend? where did he go?" before finally realizing that he was once again alone in the world. Cue credits.

It was a Canadian show, but it also got shown a lot in Britain during the 1980's (as I recall, it was the only kids' show on Sunday mornings at the time) and so there's a whole bunch of twentysomething Brits who've been emotionally scarred by that malicious hound.

Kelvin Green

Man, I'm going to have to kick God in the nuts one day for saddling my with Lassie and Benji and keeping me from the littlest hobo by having me be born here. Granted, he's done plenty of other good for me... but I can't let that Hobo thing go. It sounds friggin' hilarious. And who knew Canada had their own shows?! Wow.

Hey Mr. Kirkman and crew. I'm a fan, and TWD kicks my sorry little ass. The thought of zombies taking over the Earth pops into my head every day, and when I look about my dirt-ridden town and all

the people who shamble about so much like the undead that they might as well be them, I sigh and read some back issues. Anyways, fantasies aside, I'm writing because I've got some beef with your readers...

Seems everyone's hating on Rick lately. Not everyone, but quite a few uneducated seem to just want you to kill him and do it quickly. That's so fucking stupid. I mean, kill him if you want, that's fine, but their reasons are ridiculous. Saying shit like he's become too bossy or that he's snapped and gone crazy and what have you, it seems these guys aren't actually reading your comic. They don't understand that even when humanity has failed, people are still human. To explain, let's take a look at why Rick is collapsing...

He wakes up, has no idea what's going on, and zombies are trying to eat him. Everyone else not in a coma knew about the zombies and slowly came to grips with it, where Rick's just thrown into it. Also, he has no clue where his family is and his only concern being finding them, brother never gets a chance to deal with all that. That's huge. Anyone of your snot-nosed pimply readers would break in two and throw themselves to the mercy of the zombies put into that situation. Rick's harder than Hell for dealing with that the way he did. Then, when he does find his family...

Everything seems fine, until Rick discovers his best friend has been hoping that Rick was gone forever so he could score with his wife, which he already did. Then his son kills Shane, and Lori's pregnant. On top of that, Rick gets nominated and elected to be leader of the little group, a position I doubt he really wants but knows not to turn it down because everyone is relying on him and he knows that he would be the best man for the job and that if he didn't take it he would be failing all those that have come to trust him. That's fucking heavy as well. And he still hasn't come to grips with the world properly yet.

Then every attempt at a better life gets someone or someones killed. Rick takes responsibility. This is fucking ridiculous. I feel so bad for this guy, he's been just eating everyone's shit this entire time. So, when Rick finds a fucked up murderer attempting to off most everyone in the group, he goes ballistic. He gets all that aggression out on this psycho and your readers berate him for it. He knows he's losing his mind, so he ups his aggression and assertiveness in an attempt to control it and this is the outcome. Anyone would react the same, if not worse. And when some misguided asshole threatens to force everyone out of safety, Rick thinks of everyone else and shoots the man. Cold, but necessary. He's not irrational or a danger to the group, he's just doing the God damned best he can for everyone, and fuck those readers who want him dead for it. The laws of man definitely become suspended when the system of man fails. But, if you've been planning on killing him, do it for the right reasons, not because some 14-year-old thinks Rick's not playing fair.

Anyways, thanks for listening to my rant. I just hope you print this and set some of the misguided straight. But aside from all that, you fuckers kick ass. Beautifully done comic here, and my favorite on the market by far. Can I come work for you?

Never stop.

Love,
Jeff Allen

Aside from slightly insulting some of the fine readers of this comic, I've got to say you've hit the nail on the head. That's a pretty fair explanation of why Rick has been acting like he's acting. Bravo and thanks for writing.

Kirkman you Bastard!

After picking up volume 1 of the trade back in October of 2004, then followed by volumes 2 and 3, I am now on board with the monthly issues with Issue #19. Congrats, I'm addicted. And now I need my monthly fix. I can't hold out until volume 4 of the trade gets published. Bastard.

I don't really pick up many comics. At present I purchase Amazing Spider-Man, Fantastic Four, Daredevil, and the Walking Dead. By far, your book is my favorite, and the best of the four. Followed by Daredevil. The Walking Dead is so well done, that it's a pure joy to sit down and read it. Since my

first monthly issue was #19, I hand no clue about those crazy letter pages. How come some publishers can't even include a letter page in their titles, and this title runs so many pages. Between the story, and the letter pages, this title is well worth the monthly price.

I just finished issue #20. Power Generator! What good is that? They'll need oil, or some sort of fossil fuel to get any electricity out of it. If there is some oil still in it, it will eventually run out. Then what? Back to the same problem. Ha! Here is a suggestion on how they can solve their long-term energy problem since we are under the assumption that nobody is delivering gas to them. They need to get some sort of portable power. Get a Yellow Pages. Locate the nearest Hardware store that has portable batteries with built in inverters and AC outlets on them. Probably at the same stop, they'll have Solar Panels that connect to those portable batteries in order to charge and recharge them. Once the place is located, get Rick and a few others to raid it and get the material to the prison. It won't solve all their problems, but it can solve a few things.

Anyway, keep up the good. Bastard. I'll be there supporting this title, as long as you keep surprising the reader.

AA

Thanks for the letter, AA. We'll see where things go with this power generator. Our crew seems to have a lot to deal with before they even get back to figuring out how to turn that thing on.

Dear Mr Kirkman,

My way to becoming a reader of The Walking Dead was pretty long and curvy. I guess it all started with Jubilee (as many things in my life did). About a year ago, when I learned that a Jubilee comic was about to be published in September, my first natural reaction was to scream from joy. The second reaction was to write to a comic-based web-group I used to hang around and ask "Is this Kirkman guy good?" The answers I got were pretty favorable, so I started to think that me and the little mutant firecracker finally got lucky.

Which proved to be true, by the way - after the series was finished, I considered it to have been lacking only two things - a better artist and a longer story. Some time had passed,

before I heard about a comic title that sounded kind of strange. So once again I went and asked, "What's The Walking Dead about and who's the writer?"

"It's a great story about people facing an unusual situation, namely zombies", I heard. "And the writer's Robert Kirkman".

That's how I finally became the proud possessor of The Walking Dead #17. And my respect to the man that can write with such a great style both about zombies and killers and about a sharp-tongued mutant sparkcaster grew even greater.

To put it shortly - You're the man.

Regards,
Danil Iver a. k. a. Salamander

Cool to hear from you. I'm always happy to hear how people came to read this book. It's pretty odd that you came in from JUBILEE but that's fine. You got here and that's what's important. I got a lot of crap for taking that book on. I mean, I'm not a teenage girl and that book wasn't exactly aimed at my usual demographic. I've got to say, though, I had a blast writing that book. Mostly because of Cory Sedlmeier the editor, who after a while pretty much let me run wild with the thing. I recommend the book to anyone who's liked any of my stuff. I think it ended up being a cool little series.

Dear Mr. Kirkman and Letter Hacks,

First of all, I hate zombie movies.

I just wanted to get that out of the way. I don't watch zombie movies or horror movies in general, they're just not my thing, y' know? And because of that I successfully resisted The Walking Dead for a really long time.

But, I consider myself a smart comics fan, and as the praise for TWD kept growing and getting louder, it became harder to ignore. I listened to a comic shop owner talk for an hour about TWD and Invincible, and I read the fourthrail.com every week, and Randy Lander just kept writing about how great the book is too. And couple all the great praise I've heard with the fact that I'm a 28 year old schoolteacher that has the summer off, and well I had the time to try something new. So, I broke down and bought the first trade.

Fast-forward a month. I now have all 3 trades and issues #19 and #20. I've just read volume 2 and volume 3 at once, in a frenzy, like I was a zombie that just found a fresh body in the grass. I hope you're satisfied, and proud of yourself, because TWD might be the best book in comics today. And I couldn't have found TWD at a better time, because there's not a lot at the Big Two that has me excited right now,,, except for Runaways and everything that Ed Brubaker writes.

Bah--Brubaker's a hack!

What do I like about The Walking Dead? Well, how about great pencils by Charlie Adlard, great covers by Tony Moore, and the awesome Cliff Rathburn greytones. Please don't ever switch to color. The black and white suits the book perfectly, and really differentiates it from the other books out there. (BTW, another great book that uses greytones from Image is Small Gods, check that out.) And the writing on TWD is just superb. You're doing a great job. There is just such an aura of danger and menace that just permeates the book, at any second you know something awful could happen. And that's a good thing. TWD is never boring or slow paced. In fact, I don't think I've ever read a comic book with such a sense of urgency before, the only thing else that I've found to be such a gripping read was Bendis' Daredevil and Brubaker's Sleeper. So keep the great characterization and the great twists coming, and I'm going to keep reading.

And I still hate zombie movies.

-Nick Rini
Queens, NY

PS - I love the long letter columns too. That way you can print lots of letters... "hint hint"

Yeah, yeah... you've been printed. Happy now? And thanks for the kind words.

Robert Kirkman,
"Lovin' every minute of it (LOVIN'), Lovin' every minute of it (LOVIN')"
The slow yet steady turn of Rick is probably what I think is the greatest thing missing from most mainstream literature. I believe it is your intent to, by the time it is all said and done, make Rick the "bad guy". And if so, I love it. If not, do it anyway and claim that was your idea all along.

I love how there is no clear cut right or wrong, hero or villian, and how every decision good or bad is simply about survival. When it comes time for someone to "be the hero" or "the villian" it will be that more poignant because there will have been times we've rooted for or against them.

I recently sold #3-20 (like a week after I got 20) because I had filled the box. I only collect the TPB of your book (no others, take that for the ego boost it is) because I feel comics, like all books are best read and then shared.

Land of the Dead: Disappointed. I know the critics thought it was Romero's best but to me it showed that if your name is George and you haven't touched your franchise in over 20 years then your first attempt back at bat will be a dud to your true fans. I thought the comparison between the undead and mexicans was anything but subtle and made the movie overly preachy (again, this is why I'm loving your book, all the social commentary is buried deep within the simple need to survive). Still haven't seen Undead and I'm still hoping your book will become a television series. Anything new to report?

Nope.

I don't have any questions this time. I've learned (as you stated in the last letter column) that all the questions I have I don't want answered in the letters column. All I can say is as long as this book is being written I'll be reading it.

Merl Key
Columbus, IN.

PS- I'd like to point out that you've made me rethink all those "dumb Kentuckian" jokes we like to tell here in Indiana. Darn.

Man... you guys tell dumb Kentuckian jokes there? That's not cool. We just make fun of people from Ohio here...

Dead crew-

Hey, fellas. As a HUGE fan of all things zombie, just wanted to drop you a line to let you know how happy I was to discover your comic. As opposed to writing a general stroke letter, I'd like to let you know what it is, exactly, that I like about it. First, you've done a great job writing a story about people, not zombies. Good idea. That's what made Romero's classic films classics in the first place. Second, this is one unpredictable comic. I never know where it's going. I love that. I can't tell you how much I hate predictable horror stories (Hollywood, I'm looking at you). Third, the artwork is excellent. Keep the zombies gory and disgusting. Do with your artwork what make-up effects can't, and what CGI continually screws up: believable depth of damage.

Oh, and I realize you plot out your stories pretty far in advance, so this might be a futile suggestion, but here it is anyway: NEVER reveal the exact cause of the zombie holocaust. If you're compelled to tell us something about the cause, keep it vague. Maybe give us contradictory explanations. Just don't tell us outright. Keep it mysterious.

One last thing: I've also recently discovered a zombie novel your readers might be interested in checking out. Xombies, by Walter Greatshell. Not exactly a "traditional" zombie apocalypse story, but worth a look.

Keep up the great work.
-Barabbas Ward

Thanks for the recommendation. You'll be happy to know that I don't have any plans to reveal the cause of the zombies... and yes, I do have this plotted out pretty far in advance.

Dear Kirkman,
I have been looking for quite awhile a comic, any comic, to replace Cerebus. Since it had its 300th issue I have not been able to find anything worth spending my money on. I do not go for the Super Hero genre and I tend to favor black and white. Then my local comic shop guy gave me 3 or 4 titles to check out. The first one that 'stuck' was 100 Bullets. It took time to get my hands on Walking Dead as I later found out it is a hot read. But knowing that it was black and white (and being a Zombie fan) I knew I was going to give it a try.

I am glad I did. I bought the first 3 trades. They were very interesting. Admittedly, I was thrown for a loop when artists were switched but that was a mild bump-in-the-road. I find that using the human viewpoint is rather compelling. It allows me to think 'How would I react' under these circumstances.

My only criticism is that the pacing is quick. Almost too quick. It tends to not allow what is happening to sink in. By the time I have an opinion or feeling about something we are into the next crises.

At Herschel's farm it may have been more realistic if the whole barn incident came up much later. It was already starting to get cold and zombie activity waning. More time in the safety of the farm, to give a false sense of security, would have set up the loss of Hershel's kids and Herschel's decline into despair better.

Maybe so, but at the time I just wanted to keep things moving. In hindsight there are plenty of things I would do differently. All in all, though... I LIKE that the book moves at a quick pace.

Also, Thomas should have been on the loose longer. Thomas would have laid low for a bit before making another attack so quickly. As if he was still on that first high from beheading the first two girls and would need to come off of that before attacking again. I think he would revel in his captive prey's uncertainty and misguidance as to who was the killer. Plus it would have been a nice back drop for some Hitchcockian episode were everybody turns on each other.

I know this may sound more negative and positive but, truly, I am enjoying it immensely (not too many comics have you thinking after you stop reading) and I plan on being with you for the entire run

Good luck,
Dawson

Thanks for the kind words.

Mr Kirkman

First off I'd like to say that your comic kicks some serious undead ass. I've been a huge fan of the Romero style zombie world (it even influences my own artwork to a great degree) ever since I was a child. I must say that your comic lives up, and I dare say surpasses, the standard that he set for the zombie genre. And after the loss of the services of the great Tony Moore as your lead penciler you still managed to fill the void more than adequately. The comic grows better with each issue.

Now, after my gratuitous butt kissing, I have a suggestion. I know that you have plot ideas and characters already made for future issues so I have no misconception that just because I come up with a potentially good idea that it will ever enter the comic. But I had thought up a nice character in case you're looking for new suggestions.

The idea is as follows. A survivalist, even before the zombie holocaust he loved to spend months in the wilderness surviving off of the natural flora, emerges from the forests around the prison area and notices that the zombies are being drawn towards the survivors. Thus he investigates only to discover the inhabitants of the prison facility. Now the kicker is that he had his best friend, his loyal dog with him the entire time. At some point the dog was infected by the zombie "virus". Now being the loyal (if simple-minded) friend that he is the dog remembers all of his commands and still acts as the right hand of his master. Now, since he knows much of survival the man would be a great asset to those who inhabit the prison. But he refuses to leave his dog behind, he loves the creature.

I could see this character having great depth, and it would add a new dimension to the zombies and how they are turned and to what extent they can retain humanity. Humans go bloodthirsty and yet a dig remains much as it has always been.

As I said before, I don't expect you to introduce this into the comic, but I thought I'd share the idea anyways. It's even possible you had thought of

something along this line before now. I just thought I'd give my two cents.
Keep up the excellent work.

Adam Aubin

I'm not really looking for reader suggestions on new characters, sadly. That opens up all kinds of tricky legal issues. Also, there aren't any zombie dogs in this book. I know you said you didn't expect me to use the idea, but I thought I'd let you know anyway. Thanks for the letter.

Dear Storyteller of Warm Fuzzy Tales,

Are they still making this comic?!?! Just kidding. I liked the walking dead character bios. Try to put in 1st and last appearances if ya could please. How bout some maps there, Magellan? I know the prison situation is gonna break soon. Have no clue. Maybe the generator will shed some light.

Brendan Walsh

I'll try to add appearances to the bios soon. That's a good idea. The map seems like a bit more work than I'm willing or able to do at this point. Plus, I don't really like being nailed down to a set area. Knowing the prison is in Georgia, south of Atlanta is enough for me.

Dear Mr Kirkman,

Is it possible to take out a zombie if you repeatedly hit it in the head with a Walking Dead Hardcover?

Thanks,
Paul Shiple

We'll soon find out.

Yo,
Since I started reading the Walking Dead I've become obsessed with zombies. I often dream about what would happen if there really was to be a zombie apocalypse. I've also found myself searching for other zombie comic book series and holding zombie movie nights! So, thanks for everything. I'll send photos when I finally get some of the Walking Dead artwork tattooed on me.

It sucks, it's late August and I've only read up to issue 20 because that's all that's arrived here in Australia! The frustration!

You're getting them about as fast as we do here.

Anyway, the artwork, depth and everything about the Walking Dead rules! It's also refreshing to see a female who's a tough as fuck, rogue zombie killah!
I'm hoping that in the issues to come you will reveal more of what the other parts of the prison look like. I almost wish I could go exploring myself.

x Franca x

Now, you guys have got to stop with this zombie dreaming stuff. I mean, really... it would be a BAD THING for this to happen in real life. You're starting to creep me out. Loonies.

Hey Robert,

Well, now that we're into the twenties (big congrats) I Guess I might as well pledge my undying (pun intended) allegiance.

Firstly, thanks. It's been a long, long time since I've looked forward to any monthly comic as much as Walking Dead. Since Preacher, Starman, Transmetropolitan and Hitman wrapped up, There hasn't been much in the way of well written, well drawn, this -will- have- an- ending -someday monthly fare. Dude, Walking Dead sits proudly in the ranks of all those titles I mentioned. This is, without a doubt, one of THE best comics available- Invincible being a close second, and Hunter-Killer, Hellblazer and that Vaughn guy's Ex-Machina rounding out the top five. Man, every time a new issue hits, I re-read my entire collection. It's gonna be an enjoyable hell when this gets into the sixty and seventy issue mark...

Secondly, Zombies scare the shit out of me. Creepy fucking things...

Anyway, I might as well join in the act...

• Walking Dead would suck as a movie. It needs to be said. I've been farting around in the industry long enough to know there is no way you can cram the scope of a series like this into two, or even three hours. I'd far prefer to see Walking Dead as a HBO TV series or something like it. Thirteen episode season, much like The Shield, or the Sopranos.....Shit, the first two Trades are the first season, easy.....All I ask is that I get to direct....or at the very least, Staff writer. Simon Pegg gets a role, of course- but so does Bruce Campbell. I'll think up some casting ideas.....

• Was it just me, or was anyone else expecting a little more from Land Of The Dead? Don't get me wrong, I enjoyed it- a lot, after all, Zombies, Romero, and Asia Argento(mmmmmm)...but I just thought it'd be a bit more....epic, or something. More scope. More Tom Savini. More zombies.....less zombies shooting guns!!!!!!

• Speaking of Mr. Savini- Worst Zombie film ever? Children of the Living Dead. Tom buys it in the first Fifteen minutes, and it sucks worse and worse after that. And I'm the dumbass who bought the DVD.....House of the Dead being a close second....

• The Zombie Vs Shark in Zombie Flesh Eaters does indeed rock.
• Don't be thinking you'd be screwing the fans by doing the occasional Walking Dead Annual or special. I'd happily shell out for it, and I'm sure others would. It might be a good place to spotlight other parts of zombie invasion, or show other characters While leaving the primary series to Rick and the gang. Hell, I think it'd be cool if a special or yearly one shot flashed back to the first few days of the infestation- You might say that we've seen stuff like that before, in films and such, and you'd be right- but we've never seen it get the Kirkman treatment.....

• For fucksake, don't let Tyresse have gotten bitten.....
• I get this funny feeling that Rick and Lori are heading for a nasty break up....
• For the life of me, I can't understand the comparisons to 28 fucking days later. okay, a guy wakes up from a coma.and that's about where it ends. they weren't even zombies, for Christ sake. And 28 days really got boring after they left London.

• Since Simon Pegg keeps hassling you, do you know if the rumors about a sequel to Shaun of the Dead are true?

• I for one, am happy to never know the cause of the zombies.
• Any chances of seeing zombie "sweeper" teams, in the lines of the sheriff's crew from the end of Night of The Living Dead? Surely some of them are still around.....?

keep Axel
around for a while, huh? He seems okay,
for a convicted felon.....

- Anything big planned for issue twenty five? A double sized issue? Please?
- The intestines getting caught in the rib cage was hysterical.
- Coming to Australia anytime soon? Supanova, Brisbane- I'll buy you a beer.
- Isn't it about time some one at Marvel started to give Nova a bit more credibility? Tell Bendis he needs to put him in New Avengers.

Anyway, amigo, thanks for a great read. This series is just a great as Preacher ever was- and man, that is no small praise. I'm in for the long haul....Or at least until the dead rise and you need to stop writing and evacuate to a defensible location.

Cheers,
Jake Reedy

To answer one of your questions, issue 25 is just going to be another regular-sized, regular-priced issue. I figured it'd be better to just keep plugging along rather than get (further) behind schedule trying to put a bigger issue together. It'll still be cool, though... I mean... stuff is going to happen and all.

Hello Mr. Kirkman,

I'm just writing to say that last Wednesday was my lucky day. I went to the comic book store and someone brought in their run of The Walking Dead #2-10. Don't ask me why. The owner of the store asked me if I wanted them. I bought them for cover price and read them all in one sitting. I really love the book and I'm going to get the rest of them next week and be up to reading it monthly. I thank Charlie, Cliff and Tony are also doing some great work as well. I love the Day and Dawn of the Dead. But zombie stuff has been sucking lately so I thank you very much for your work on this book and I couldn't agree with you more running zombies SUCK. Thanks for your time.

Cary Shenk

Cool. You keep reading them, we'll keep making them.

Well, that's it for another really long letters column for the Walking Dead. We'll see you in a few weeks or less (yeah, we'll be catching up on the schedule over the next few issues. That's good news, right?)

-Robert Kirkman

CHARACTERS


RICK

status: alive

Rick was a small town cop before the zombie plague hit. He has become the leader of the group he has sought refuge with.

 relations:
 LORI (wife)
 CARL (son)

SHANE

status: dead

Shane was Rick's partner. An unhealthy infatuation for Lori drove him insane. He eventually tried to kill Rick, but was shot by Carl moments before he could pull the trigger.

 relations:
 none

MORGAN

status: unknown

Morgan and his son Duane have taken up residence in Rick's old neighbor's house. Little is known of thier current whereabouts.

 relations:
 DUANE (son)

DUANE

status: unknown

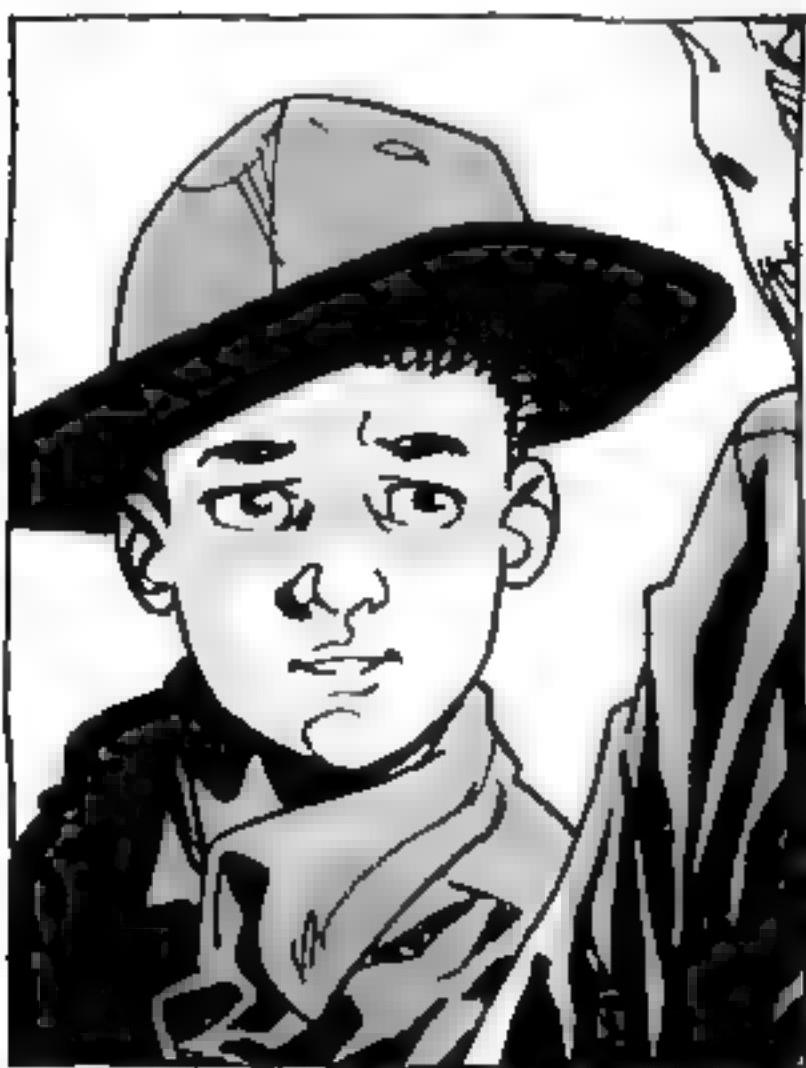
Duane and his father have taken up residence in Rick's old neighbor's house. Duane likes to talk about bodily functions.

 relations:
 MORGAN (father)

LORI

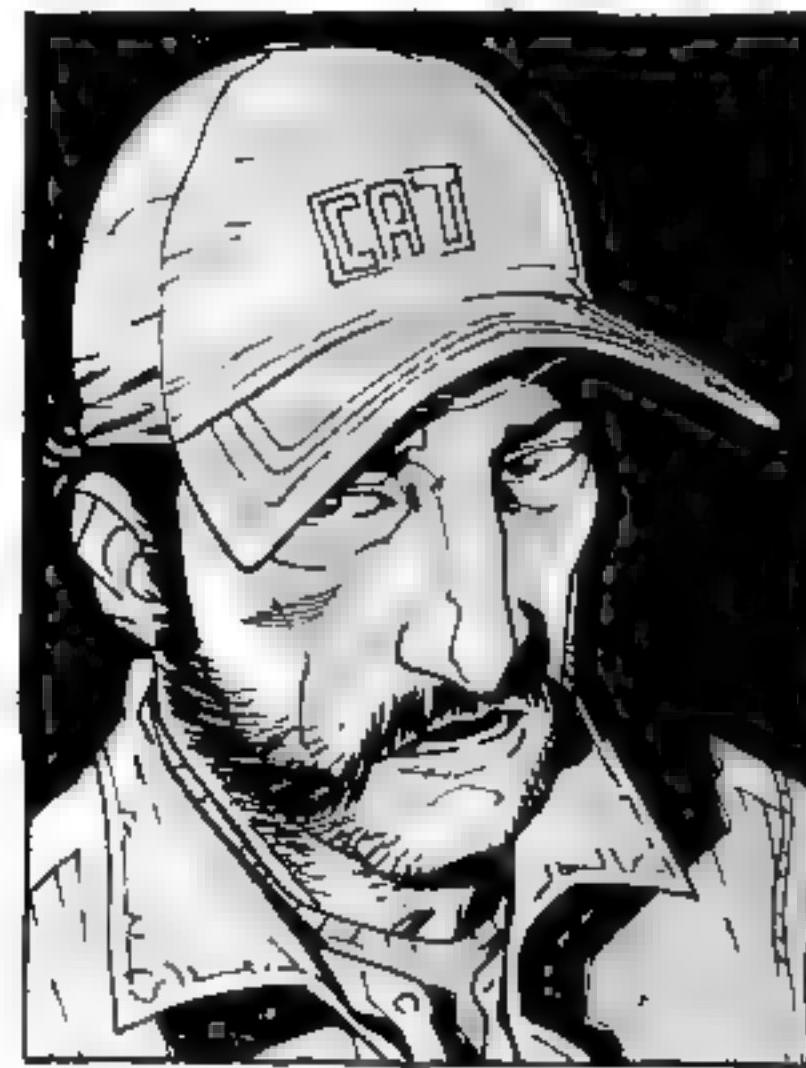
status: alive

Lori had an affair with Rick's partner Shane and is now pregnant. It is unknown who the child's father is. Rick is unaware of the affair.

 relations:
 RICK (husband)
 CARL (son)

CARL

status: alive

Carl has saved his father's life but in doing so he has killed a man. The incident still weighs heavy on his conscience.

 relations:
 RICK (father)
 LORI (mother)
 SOPHIA (girlfriend)

JIM

status: dead

Jim watched his entire family get slaughtered as he escaped Atlanta. He was the first in the camp to die of a zombie bite.

 relations:
 none

ALLEN

status: alive

Allen is still haunted by the death of his wife. His grief is so severe he has begun to neglect his children.

 relations:
 DONNA (wife)
 BEN & BILLY (sons)

DONNA

status: dead

Donna was the most outspoken person in the camp. She was killed by zombies in Wilshire Estates.

 relations:
 ALLEN (husband)
 BEN & BILLY (sons)

BEN & BILLY

status: alive

Twin sons of Allen and Donna. They really don't say much. Especially after the death of thier mother.

 relations:
 ALLEN (father)
 DONNA (mother)

GLENN

status: alive

Glenn was the camp scavenger, always venturing into Atlanta in search of goods. He had a crush on Carol but is now with Maggie, Hershel's daughter.

 relations:
 MAGGIE (girlfriend)

DALE

status: alive

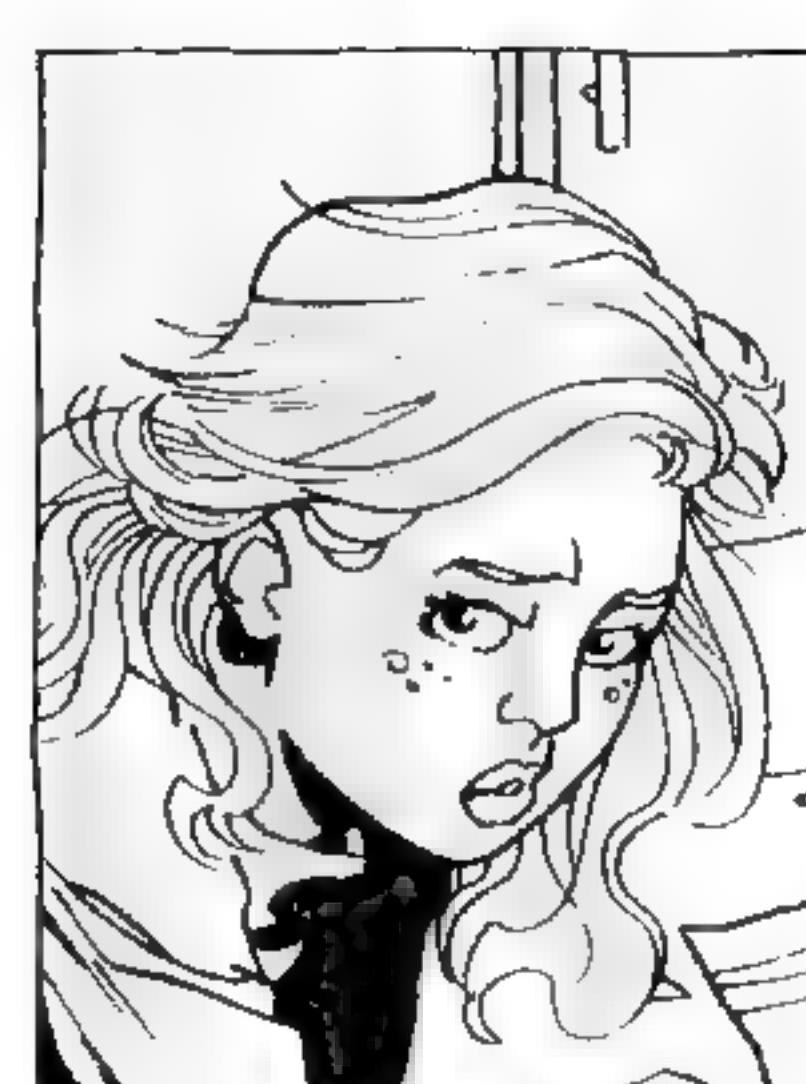
After losing his wife Dale met up with Amy and Andrea on his way to Atlanta. After Amy's death he and Andrea fell in love.

 relations:
 ANDREA (girlfriend)

CAROL

status: alive

Carol is insecure and very timid. She and Lori have become close friends. She is currently with Tyreese.

 relations:
 SOPHIA (daughter)
 TYRESE (boyfriend)

SOPHIA

status: alive

After a long period of constant nagging, Sophia has convinced Carl to be her boyfriend. They hold hands.

 relations:
 CAROL (mother)
 CARL (boyfriend)

ANDREA

status: alive

Andrea is the resident sharp shooter of the group. After watching her sister die, she's found comfort in the arms of Dale.

 relations:
 AMY (sister)
 DALE (boyfriend)

CHARACTERS



AMY

status: dead

Andrea's fun loving younger sister. Died in Atlanta during the zombie attack where Jim was bitten.

relations:
ANDREA (sister)



TYREESE

status: alive

Tyreese has become a valuable member of the group after helping Rick during many zombie attacks. He's taking his daughter's death surprisingly well.

relations:
JULIE (daughter)
CAROL (girlfriend)



JULIE

status: dead

Julie and her boyfriend Chris formed a suicide pact in order to be together forever. Chris shot first and killed her before she could kill him.

relations:
TYREESE (father)
CHRIS (boyfriend)



CHRIS

status: dead

Chris was killed at the hands of Tyreese shortly after killing his daughter, Julie in a failed suicide attempt. Only Rick knows.

relations:
JULIE (girlfriend)



OTIS

status: alive

Otis was living on Hershel's farm for safety. He has stayed behind to take care of the livestock while preparations are being made to move them to the prison.

relations:
PATRICIA (ex-girlfriend)



HERSHEL

status: alive

After witnessing the deaths of nearly all of his children, he's not in a very good state of mind.

relations:
SHAWN, ARLNOLD,
BILLY (sons)
LACEY, MAGGIE,
RACHEL,
SUSIE (daughters)



MAGGIE

status: alive

Hershel's only living daughter. Currently involved with Glenn.

relations:
HERSHEL (father)
SHAWN, ARLNOLD,
BILLY (brothers)
LACEY, RACHEL,
SUSIE (sisters)



BILLY

status: alive

Hershel's only living son.

relations:
HERSHEL (father)
SHAWN, ARLNOLD,
(brothers)
LACEY, MAGGIE,
RACHEL,
SUSIE (sisters)



LACEY

status: dead

Hershel's eldest daughter. Killed by the zombies he kept in his barn.

relations:
HERSHEL (father)
SHAWN, ARLNOLD,
BILLY (brothers)
MAGGIE, RACHEL,
SUSIE (sisters)



ARNOLD

status: dead

Hershel's second eldest son. Killed by his zombie brother, Shawn who Hershel kept in their barn.

relations:
HERSHEL (father)
SHAWN, BILLY (brothers)
LACEY, MAGGIE, RACHEL,
SUSIE (sisters)



RACHEL

status: dead

Hershel's second youngest daughter. Killed by Thomas, in the prison barber shop.

relations:
HERSHEL (father)
SHAWN, ARNOLD,
BILLY (brothers)
LACEY, MAGGIE,
SUSIE (sisters)



SUSIE

status: dead

Hershel's youngest daughter. Killed by Thomas, in the prison barber shop.

relations:
HERSHEL (father)
SHAWN, ARNOLD,
BILLY (brothers)
LACEY, MAGGIE,
RACHEL (sisters)



PATRICIA

status: alive

Otis' bleeding heart ex-girlfriend. Had a crush on Thomas. She's very misguided.

relations:
OTIS (ex-boyfriend)



AXEL

status: alive

One of the left over convicts from the prison. In for armed robbery. Little else is known.

relations:
none



THOMAS

status: dead

Serial killer. Killed Rachel and Susie, and attempted to kill Andrea before Rick beat him nearly to death and Maggie shot him.

relations:
none

CHARACTERS

**ANDREW**

status: unknown
Another convict, in for drug possession, selling, etc. Fell in love with Dexter, his cellmate.

relations:
DEXTER (boyfriend)

**DEXTER**

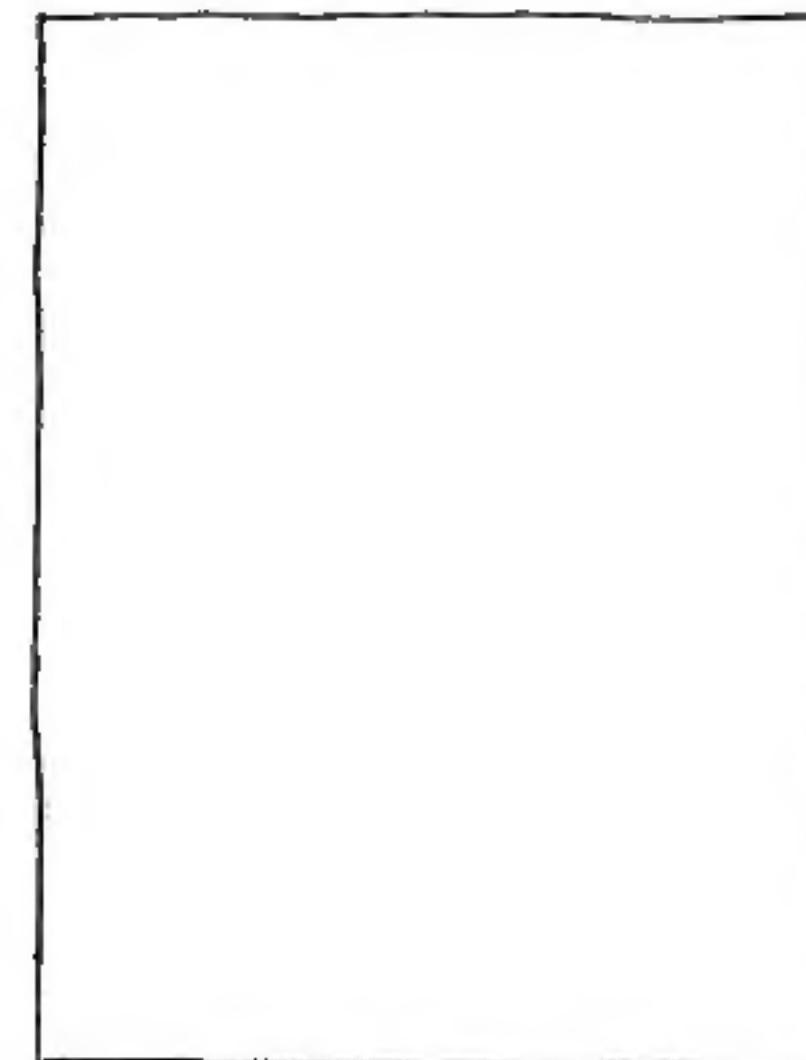
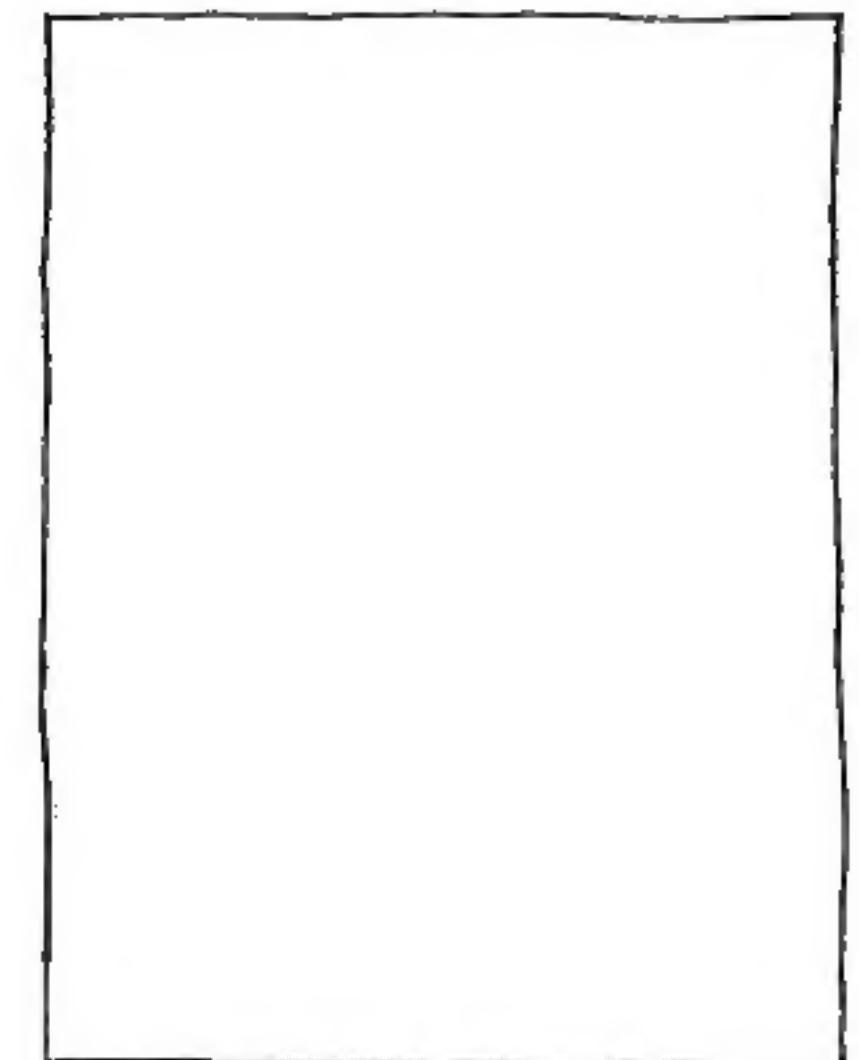
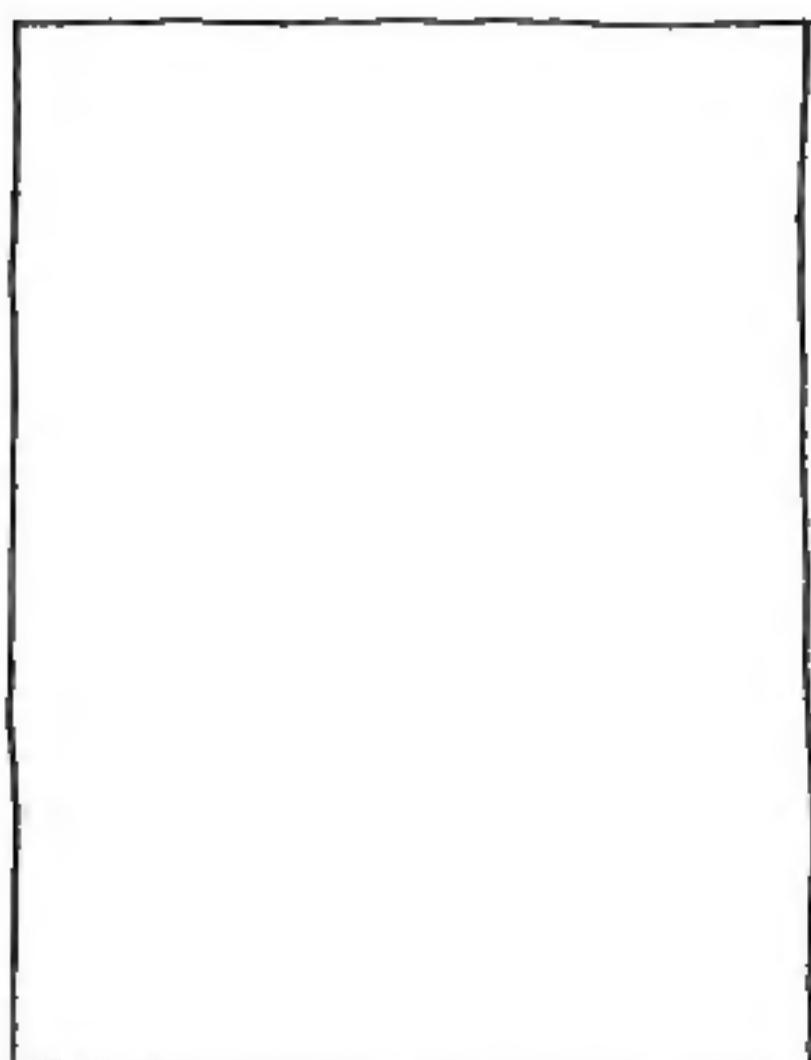
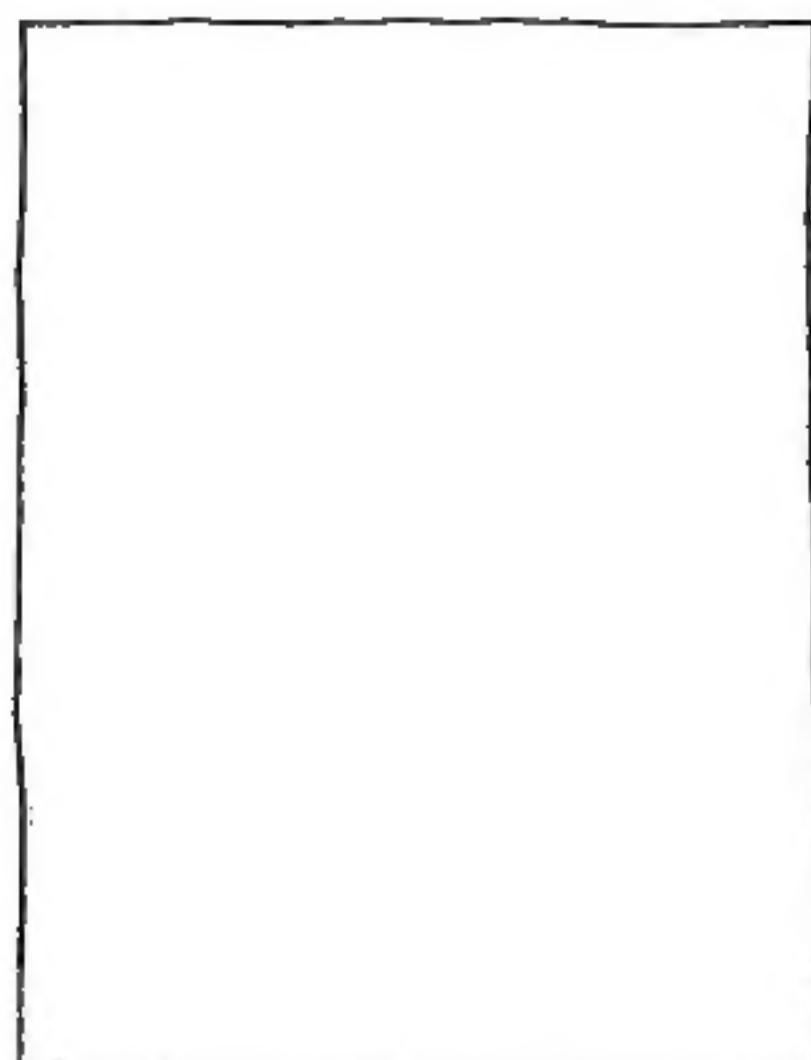
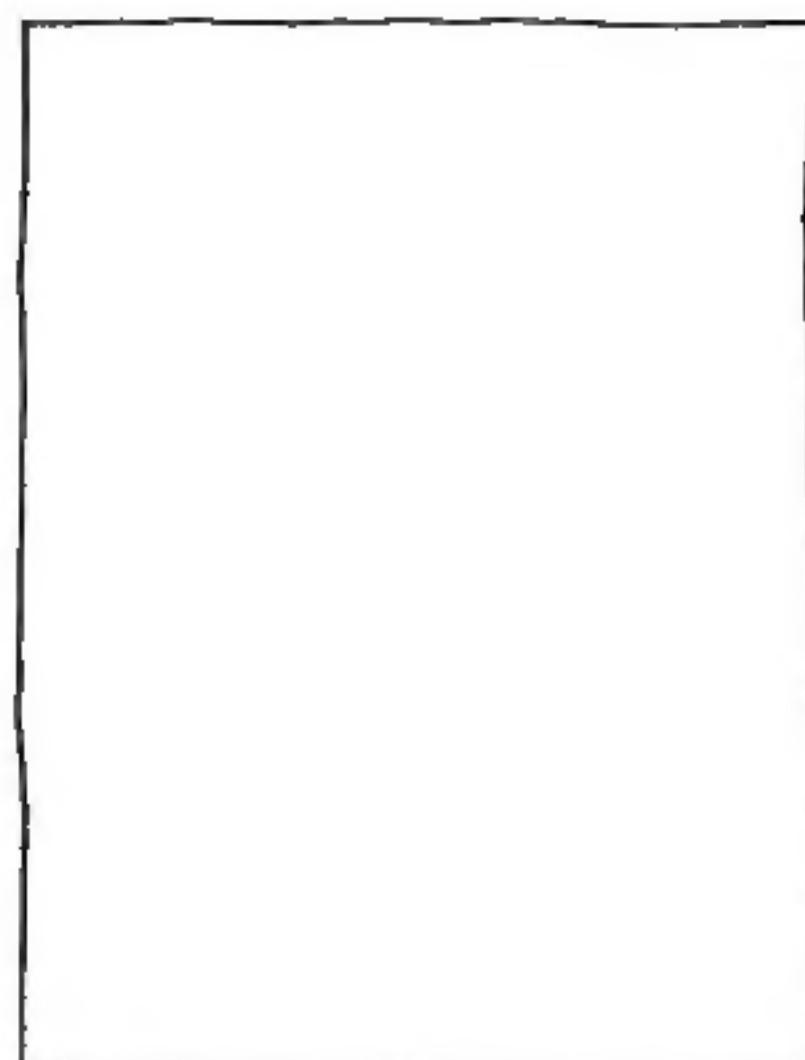
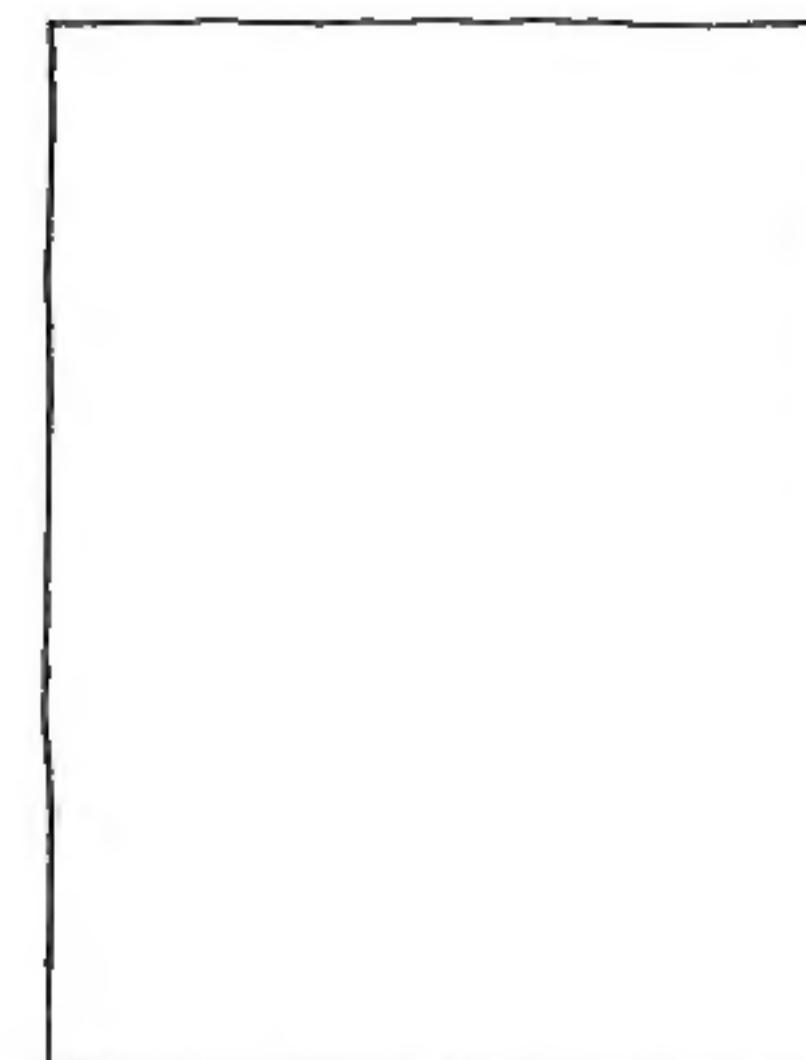
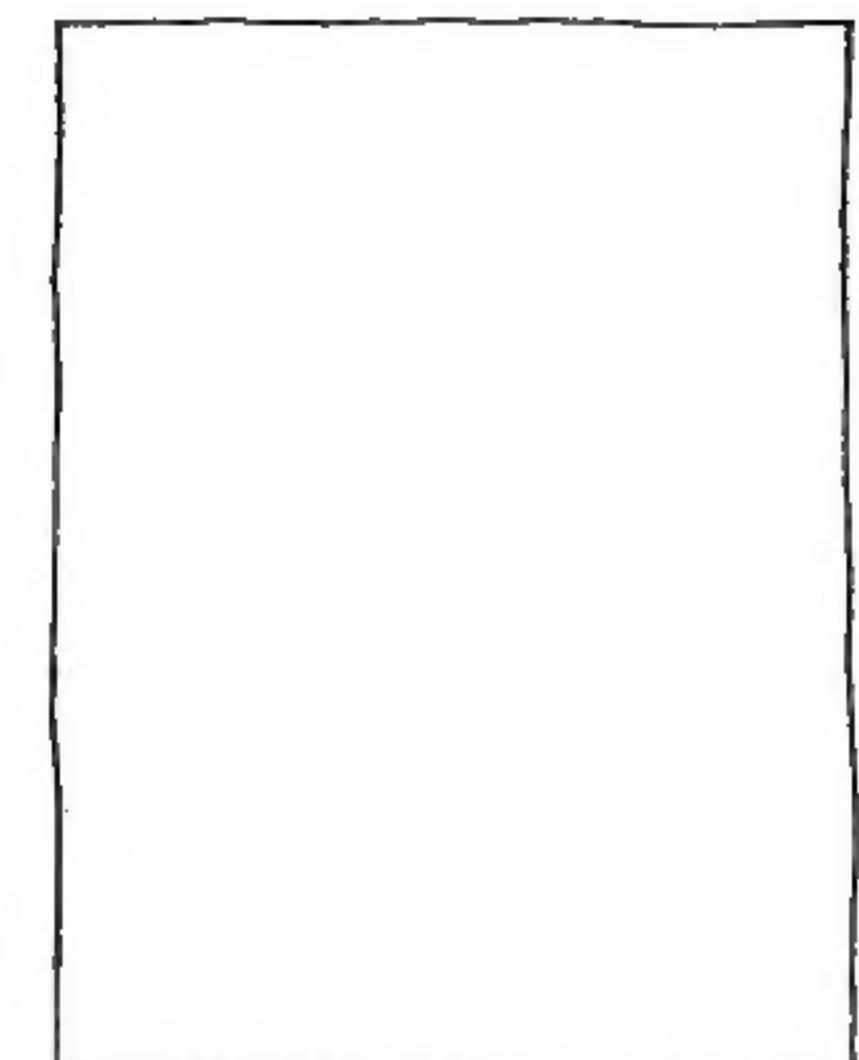
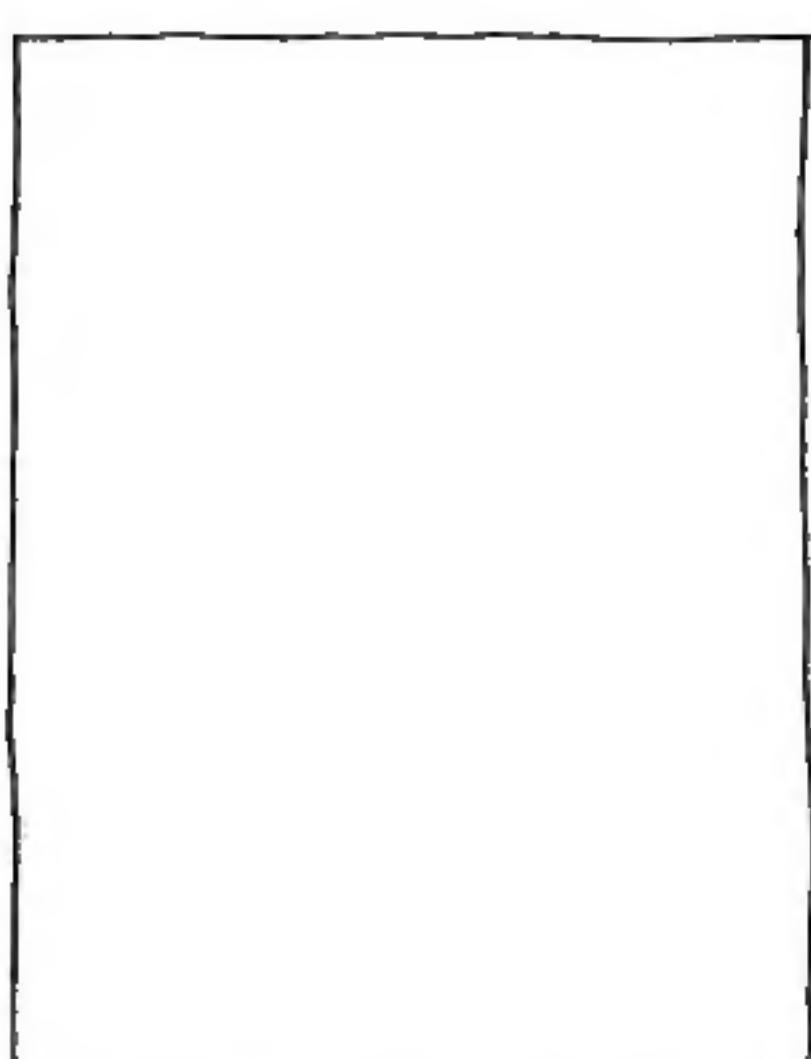
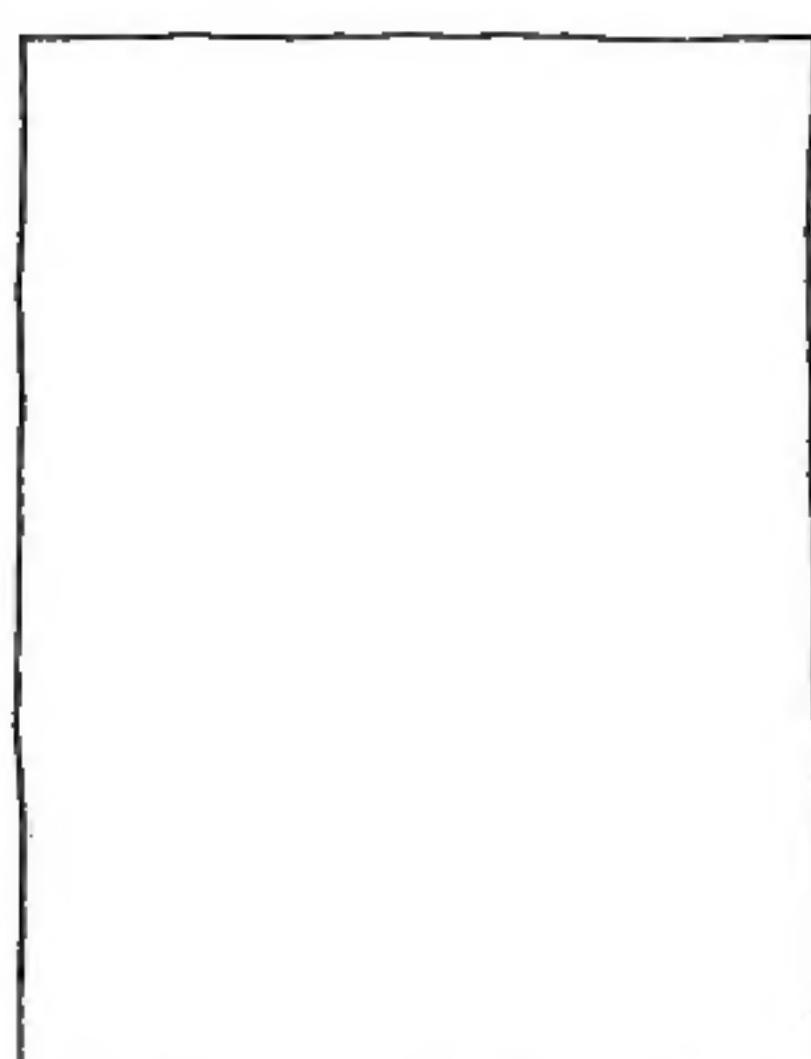
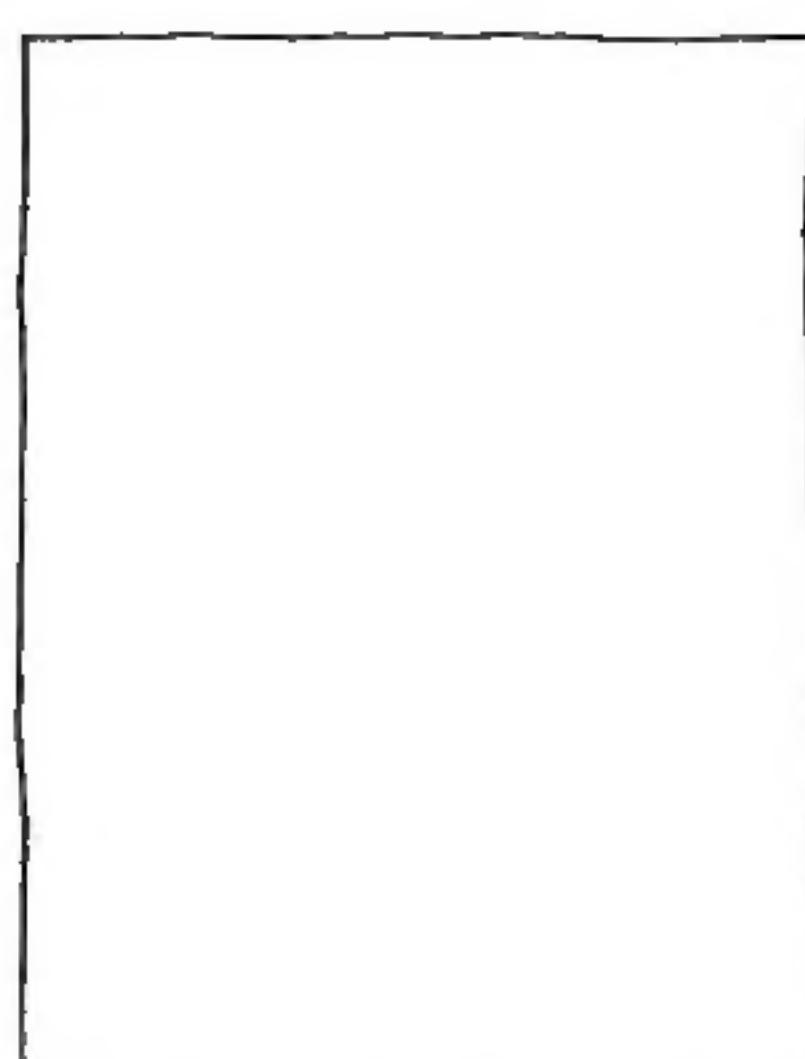
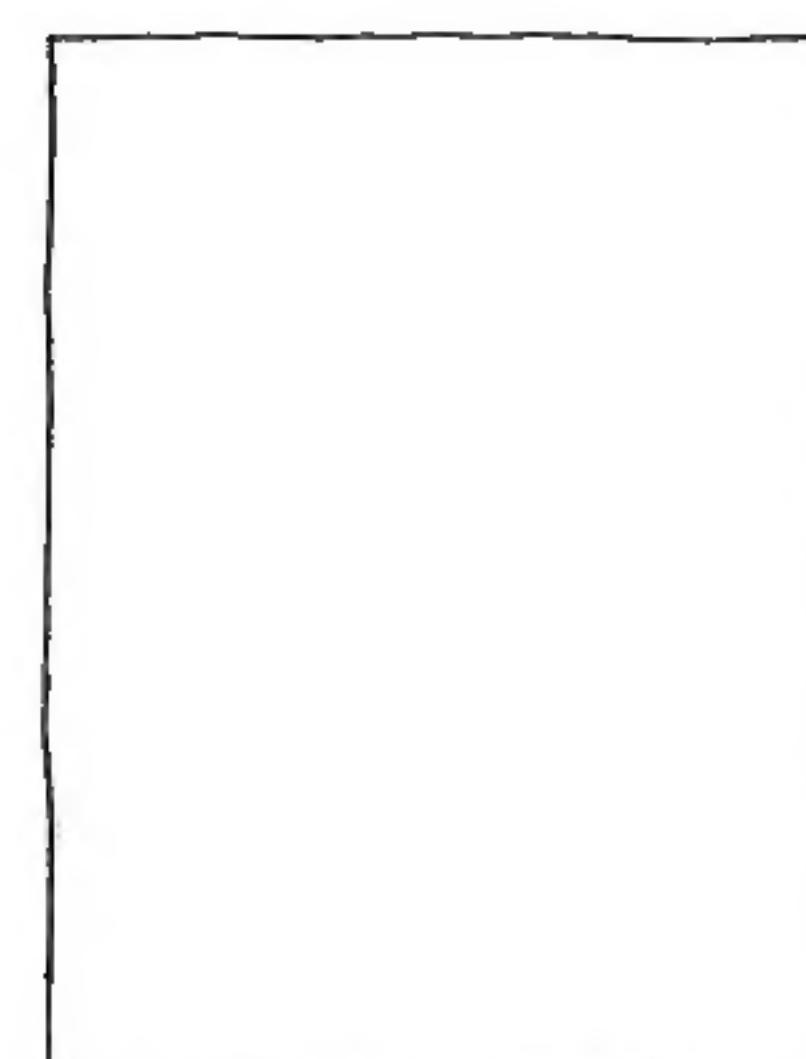
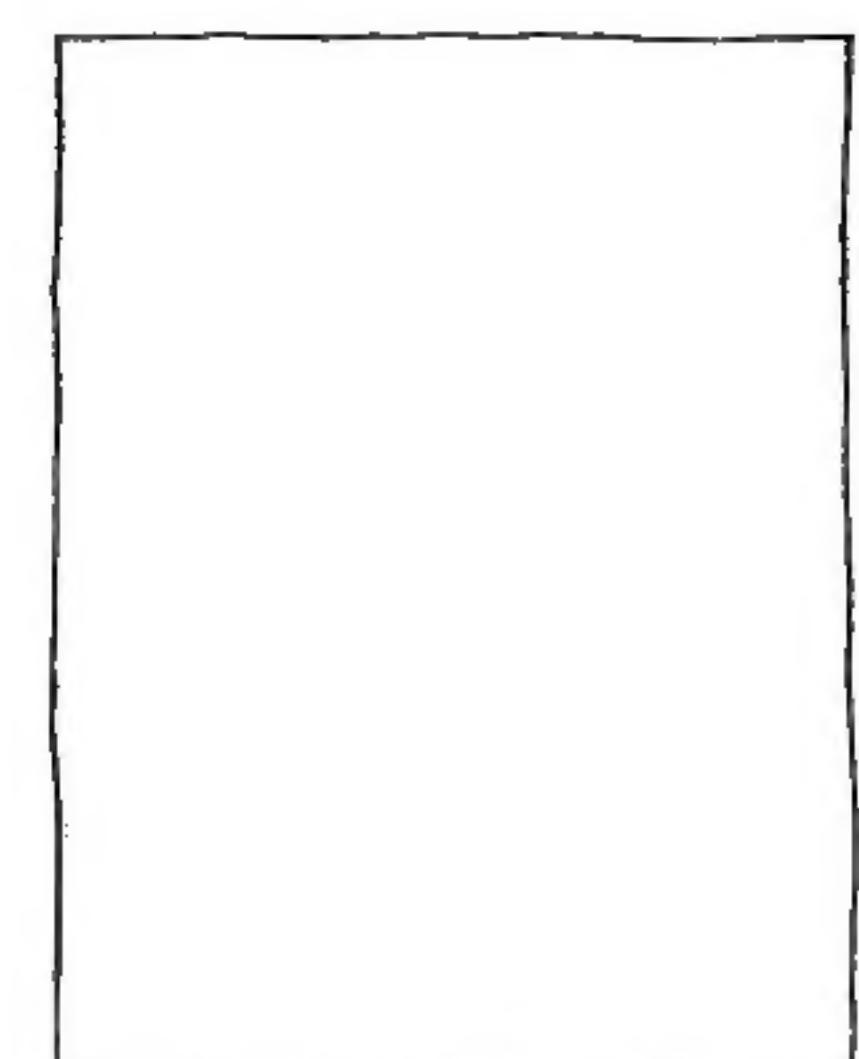
status: dead
Another convict, in for murdering his wife and her lover. Finds comfort in the arms of Andrew, his cellmate.

relations:
ANDREW (boyfriend)

**MICHONNE**

status: alive
Little is currently known about Michonne.

relations:
NONE

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THE WALKING DEAD

#23



FIST FIGHT!



LONG HOT SUMMER

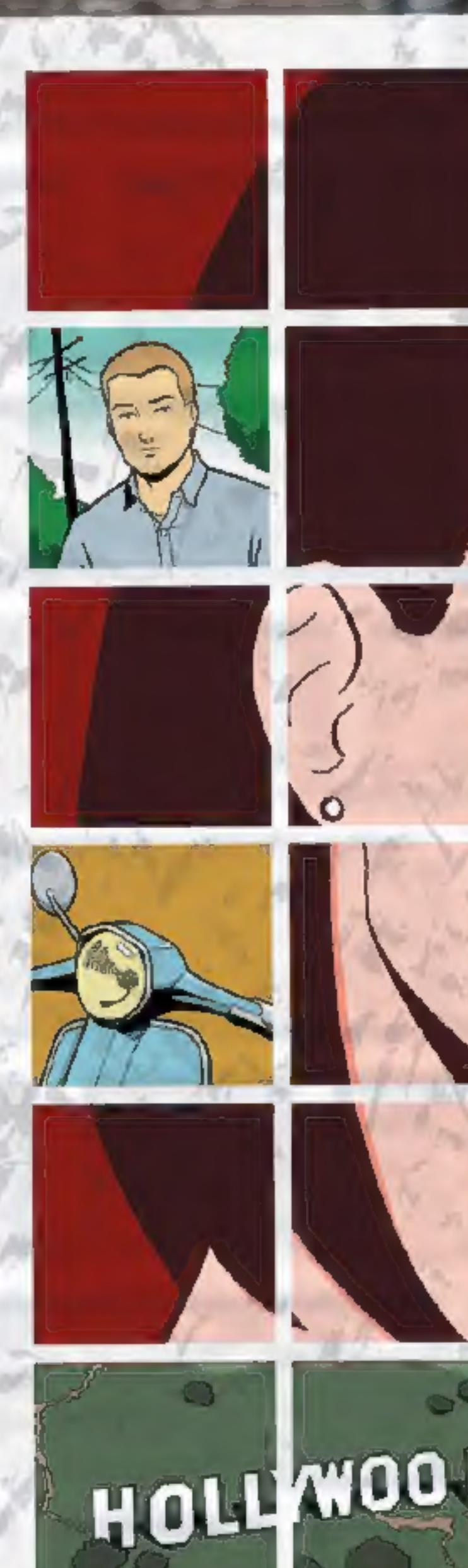
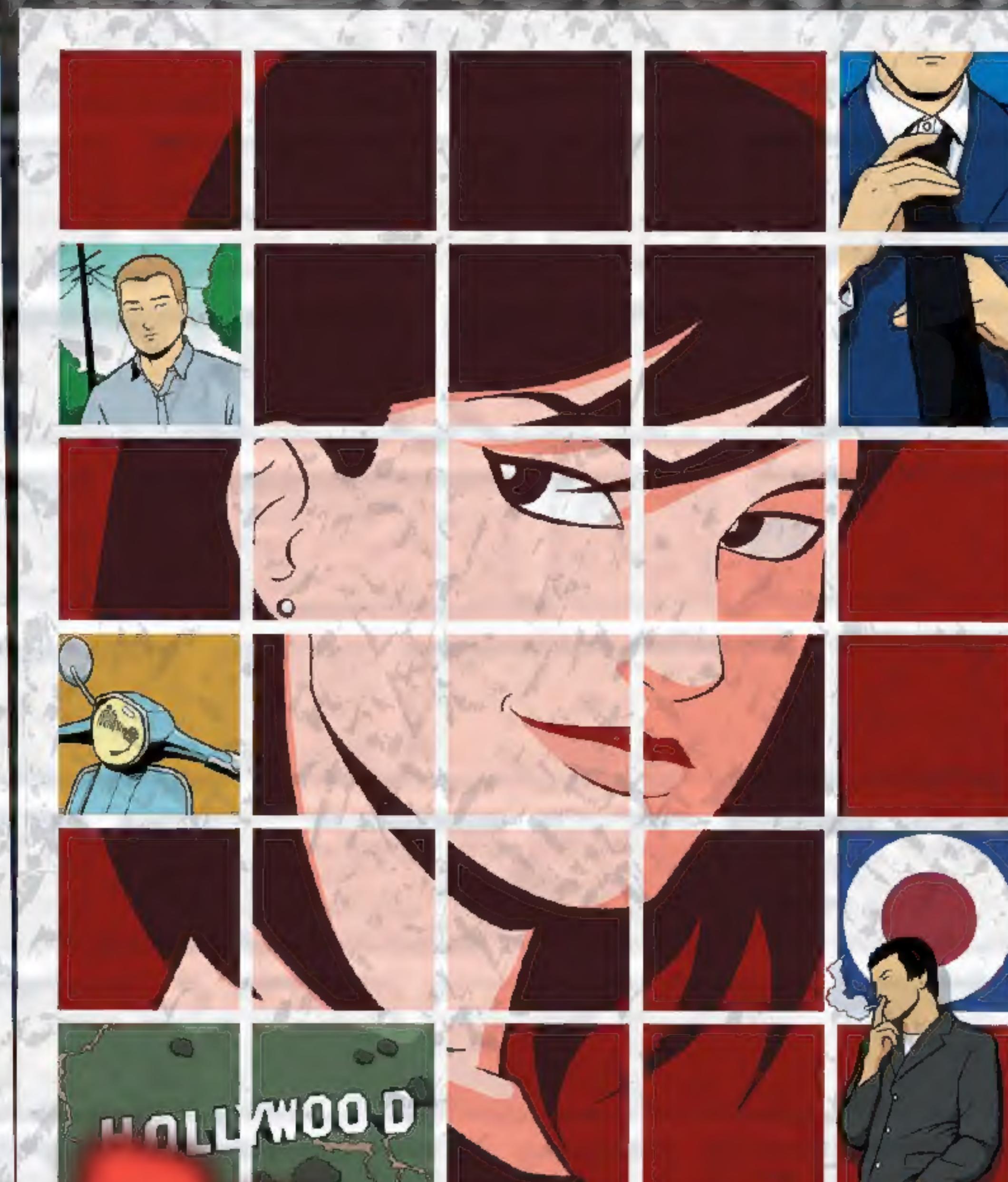
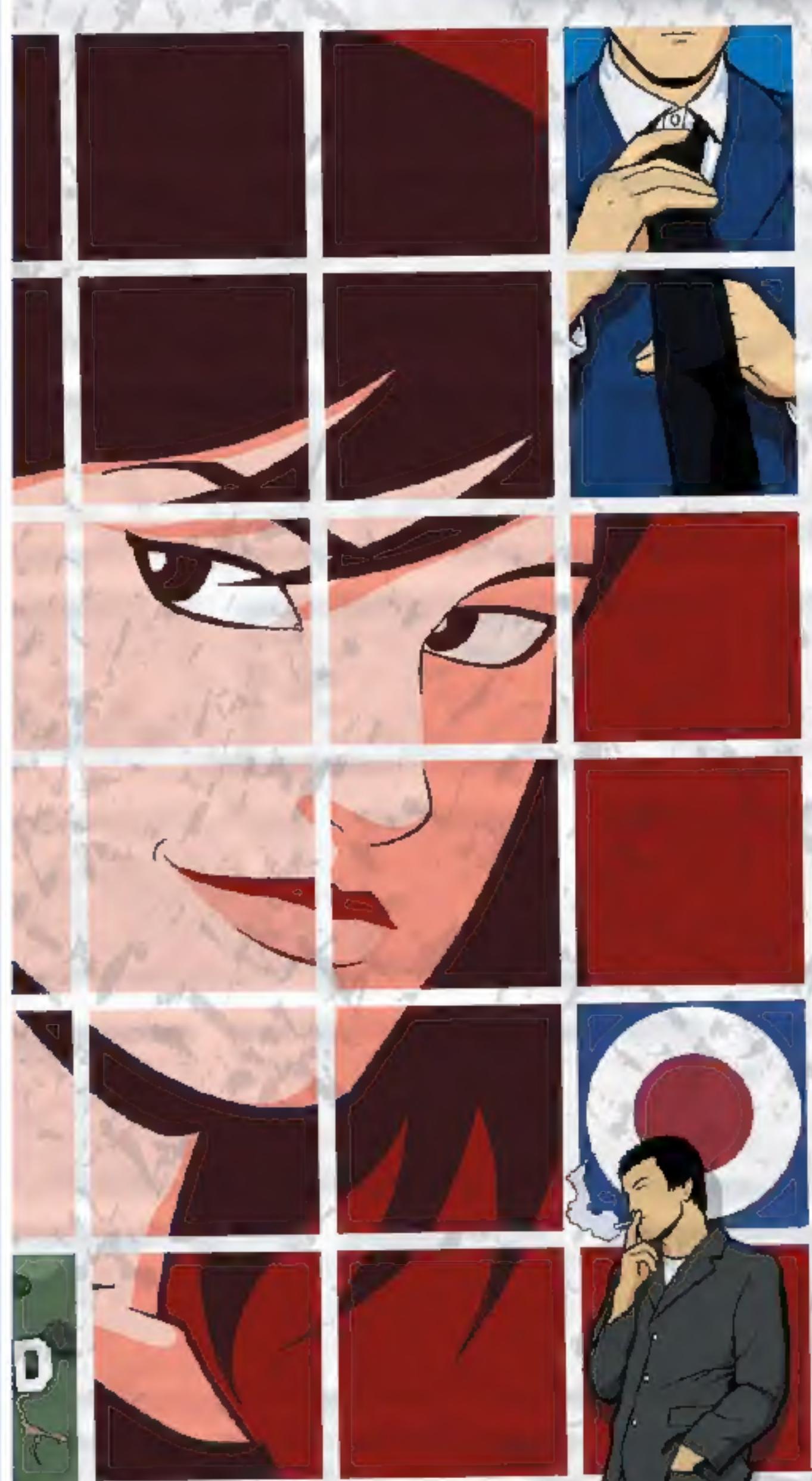
ERIC STEPHENSON

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LONG HOT SUMMER

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